





Driving the New Learning Organisation

How to unlock the potential of L&D

www.towardsmaturity.org/learningorg2017

Authored by Jane Daly and Laura Overton

In conjunction with



In-Focus Report

May 2017



About this research

This report presents the evidence for business leaders and people professionals to reflect on the new world of work and workers, as well as the expectations of the C-suite, to consider why driving a 'New Learning Organisation' will unlock potential and lead to sustainable business results. The evidence suggests that people practices within business face an uncertain and complex future, therefore, the time is right to transform learning into a strategic pillar, rather than merely an enabler.

This report aims to share effective practice and stimulate action amongst business leaders and people professionals around the globe, in order to influence and increase the impact of learning on business performance.

This report covers:

- ► The new world of work and workers
- ► The expectations of the C-suite
- Peter Senge's original vision of the 'Learning Organisation'
- ▶ Evidence on why a 'New Learning Organisation' is needed for 21st Century business and what characteristics are required for success
- ► How organisations in the top 10% of Towards Maturity's Index are helping to define the six New Learning Organisation characteristics
- Practical insights on how to unlock potential by driving the six characteristics of a New Learning Organisation

Data for this report is drawn from Towards Maturity's longitudinal research series, Risk in the C-Suite: It's Time to Unleash the Power of Your People and the Towards Maturity 2016 Benchmark™ research with 600 L&D leaders, reported in *Unlocking Potential*.

Reference is also made to data from the Towards Maturity Learning Landscape[™] research, gathered online during 2016 from a sample of over 4,700 workers (http://www.towardsmaturity.org/learnervoice3).





This In-Focus Report is free to download thanks to the support of our strategic partner, the CIPD.

Download and find out more from the Towards Maturity website: www.towardsmaturity.org/learningorg2017

The full range of Towards Maturity research reports is available from: www.towardsmaturity.org/research

Authors: Jane Daly and Laura Overton



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Foreword by Peter Cheese

In a world in which the nature of work, the workplace and workforce are transforming at a relentless pace, organisations must respond to change.

It's not surprising that many companies are finding it challenging to adapt to our ever-changing world. Of the Fortune 500 companies of 60 years ago, only 12% make the list today and, in the UK, around 40 companies go into liquidation every day.

The ability for organisations to successfully evolve is ultimately determined by the capability of their staff. Transformation of the organisation is inextricably linked to the transformation of individuals and for that to be a reality, learning has to be at the core.

Some 25 years ago, the American systems scientist Peter Senge wrote the inspirational and influential book, *The Fifth Discipline*, in which he defined the concept of a learning organisation; a company that continuously transforms itself through the learning and development of its members.

For some of us, the publication of that book may seem like yesterday. In 1997, Harvard Business Review identified it as one of the most significant management books of the past 75 years and since its release, more than a million copies have been sold.

Sadly, the realisation of Senge's compelling vision, that successful organisations are built around a pervasive learning culture, has been elusive. There have been many debates as to why this has been the case and perhaps like much innovative thinking it was simply ahead of its time.

However, there are signs that the climate for the emergence of the genuine learning organisation has arrived. Principally, because learning itself has not just gone through an evolution, but a revolution.

We have moved from an era when the course was the default learning approach, to one where skills and capabilities are developed through accessible and agile methods. Learning can now be delivered in the flow of work, not just in a classroom environment. Digital technologies facilitate learning anytime, anywhere and data enables learning to be targeted to need. The proliferation of excellent online content has shifted learning design from sluggish creation to swift curation. Online communities enable like-minded people to freely share practice and solutions and expertise is not limited to gurus but exists within the group. And, many



Peter CheeseChief Executive,
CIPD



commit to professional development both at work and in their own time, sourcing self-directed learning solutions.

This report, a further landmark in the strategic research partnership between Towards Maturity and CIPD, reveals the clear characteristics of those that are now harnessing these shifts to emerge as genuine learning organisations.

The outcomes demonstrated by these New Learning Organisations are as significant as their ability to fulfil Senge's elusive vision.

Learning has a clear link to growth, innovation and motivation. The New Learning Organisations respond faster to change through effective problem solving and productivity is increased with talent strategies to develop and keep the best people. Notable improvements are seen in performance, profitability, sustainability and customer satisfaction.

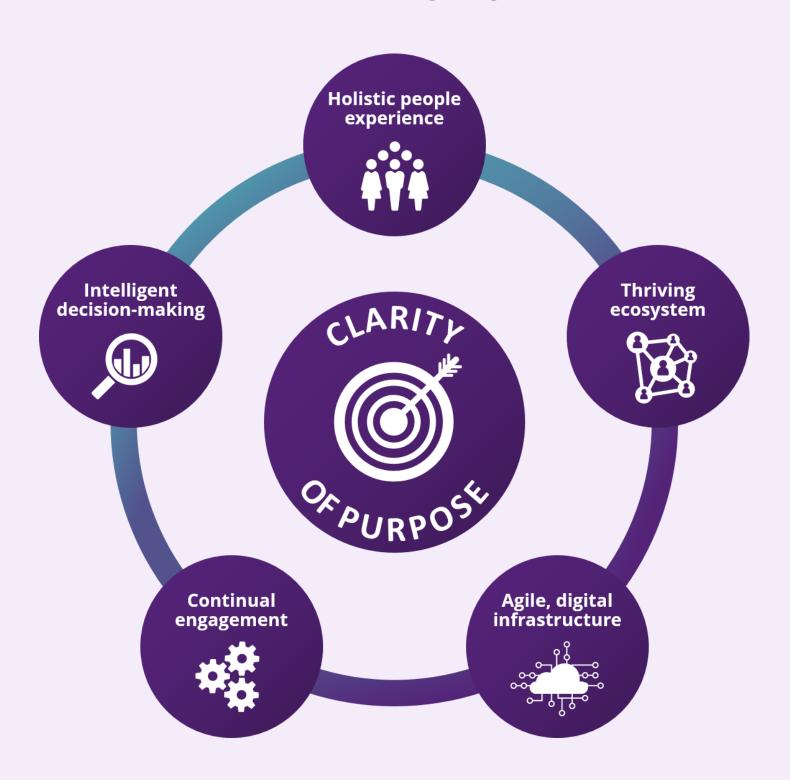
Whilst we are living in times of unprecedented change, we are also presented with unparalleled opportunities. The evidence is clear; the conditions are now conducive for the emergence of the genuine learning organisation.

The renowned French novelist Victor Hugo once remarked "Nothing is stronger than an idea whose time has come." Senge's vision for learning being at the heart of organisational transformation and success is finally being realised.

On behalf of the Towards Maturity-CIPD partnership, we encourage you to implement the principles in this report which are the catalyst for learning to transform your organisation.



The New Learning Organisation





Fast Facts

In the new world of work, successful organisations need to prioritise four things: growth in competitive markets, transformation, productivity and profitability. What characteristics influence these results?

Our research shows that we need to work smarter not harder.
Organisations who track in the top 10% (Top Deck) of the Towards
Maturity Benchmark are three times more likely to report benefits relating
to **growth**, **profitability**, **transformation** and **productivity** than the rest
of the sample of 600.









By studying these organisations, we have uncovered **six characteristics that will guide you to unlock potential by driving a future-focused New Learning Organisation:**



Clarity of Purpose

A shared vision and an open dialogue on how people are valued and need to adapt to deliver the organisation's performance.

The Top Deck lead the way in this characteristic – compared with the rest, they are:

- ➤ **50% more likely** to agree staff understand how their work is linked to the organisation's performance (85% vs. 54% of the rest)
- ► **Twice as likely** to agree their business leaders recognise that learning is aligned with the business plan (97% vs. 37%)



Holistic People Experience

A trusted brand that keeps to its promises and develops innovative, commercial and continuous learning opportunities.

Top Deck embrace this characteristics' example they are twice as likely to:

- ► Use technology to help onboard and develop their people (54% vs. 20% of the rest)
- ► Actively encourage staff to take on new work experiences as an opportunity to learn (74% vs. 34%)





Thriving ecosystem

A people led system that enables its people, teams and the extended enterprise to thrive and learn linked to common goals.

Top Deck demonstrate a thriving ecosystem, for example they are twice as likely to agree that:

- ► Their organisation assigns board level accountability for organisational learning (74% vs. 38% of the rest)
- ► They use available support systems to promote a culture of self-reliance (47% vs. 21%)

Agile, digitally enabled infrastructure

A virtual environment that enables a fluid exchange of knowledge, ideas and the adaptation of competence.

The Top Deck show how they exhibit this characteristic: they are 2.5 times more likely to agree that:

- ► Their staff know how to work together to productively connect and share knowledge (53% vs. 18% of the rest)
- ► Their Staff have access to job aids online or via mobile devices (69% vs29%)







Intelligent decision-making

A robust platform using insight and performance analytics to drive organisational performance and customer experience

Top Deck show how they exhibit intelligent decision-making: they are over twice as likely to agree that they:

- ► Identify specific business metrics/KPIs they want to improve through learning in partnership with senior management (79% vs. 31% of the rest)
- ▶ Benchmark our learning strategy and practices against other companies in our industry (51% vs. 21%)

Continual Engagement

A dynamic community that continually builds on business relationships resulting in energy, resilience and growth.



The Top Deck show how they exhibit continual engagement. They are twice as likely to agree that:

- ► Their organisation provides a safe environment to share ideas and work out loud (83% vs. 37% of the rest)
- ► They provide any formal learning initiatives with a specific identity and brand (95% vs. 49%)



1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The 'Learning Organisation' is a term coined and popularised by Peter M. Senge in 1990. It was Peter Senge's 1990 book *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organisation* that brought him firmly into the spotlight. More than a million copies have been sold since its publication, and in 1997, Harvard Business Review identified it as one of the seminal management books of the past 75 years.

A learning organisation is a group of people working together collectively to enhance their capabilities to create results they really care about."

Peter Senge, author of The Fifth Discipline

Since Peter Senge's 'Learning Organisation' work was first published, over 25 years have passed. Senge's work originally propelled him to the top ranks of business thinkers; he created a language of change that people in all kinds of organisations could relate to – he offered a vision for leaders where successful businesses were built around people and learning. Many organisations have taken up the challenge laid out by Senge and there have been many debates, papers published, interviews with Senge himself and new information emerging, but why wasn't Senge's vision realised more? Furthermore, why is now the right time to re-visit it?

Why wasn't Senge's vision more sustainable?

Over the last two decades, there have been several reasons why Senge's vision has not been embedded as he originally thought; from his model being too theoretical, too disciplined to implement, leaders not being up to the job, managers thinking too short term and seeing it only as a change programme but perhaps it is Senge himself, interviewed many times who can provide the most valuable insight.

In Senge's interview with the Fast Company¹ he said, "For big companies to change, we need to stop thinking like mechanics and to start acting like gardeners."

Original characteristics of the Learning Organisation

Systems Thinking

Personal mastery

Mental models

Shared vision

Team learning

Taken from
The Fifth Discipline

¹ https://www.fastcompany.com/36819/learning-change



Senge goes on to say, "We know how to create and nurture close friendships or family relationships. But when we enter the realm of the organisation, we're not sure which domain to invoke. Should we evoke the domain of the machine?"

"There are those who come down firmly on the people side: They tend to be HR professionals and line managers — people who understand that relationships, teamwork, and trust are essential to effective operations. But high-level executives are frequently separated from the day-to-day stuff of the enterprise: They look at the organisation from the perspective of numbers, financial statements, and prospective deals. Their number-one variable is the company stock price."

Senge believes change needs to happen, but it's a change of mindset of putting people first in business. This is how he summarises his call to action: "It will change. The only question is how. Once we get out of our machine mind-set, we may discover new aptitudes for growth and change. Until then, change won't come easily."

After 25 years, why aren't there more learning organisations?

In 2008, HBR reported there were three factors that had impeded progress at that point in time:

Many of the early discussions about learning organisations provided a vision of a better world rather than concrete prescriptions. As a result, the associated recommendations proved difficult to implement—managers could not identify the sequence of steps necessary for moving forward.

The concept was aimed at CEOs and senior executives rather than at managers of smaller departments and units where critical organisational work is done. Those managers had no way of assessing how their teams' learning contributed to the organisation.

Standards and tools for assessment were lacking. Without these, companies could declare victory prematurely or claim progress without delving into the or comparing themselves accurately with others.



1.2 The new world of work and workers

For organisations to survive today, they need to think about how they operate. Business is moving to networked structures; ones that are boundary-less and approach organisational design with a contemporary mindset. Digital transformation and critical economies – such as the sharing, digital and gig forces – add value or disruption to people and ultimately, an organisation's success.

The expectations of the C-suite

The top thought-leadership consultancies have surveyed over 100,000 business leaders and people professionals. These reports contain invaluable insights into the voice of the C-suite, their major challenges and opportunities. Their reports have highlighted two forces of complex challenges facing the C-suite, as they move to the new world of work and new world of workers:²

Organisational

- ► Growing in a complex and fragmented world environment
- Managing the demands of multiple economic models and overregulation
- Understanding digital, technology, automation, robotics and AI, driving a new business model
- Investing in big data and utilising intelligent data analytics

People

- Continually innovating and exceeding the customer experience
- Addressing major talent and capability gaps
- ► Leveraging value, operating through ethics and building trust with more demanding employees
- Unleashing the power of people and the peoples' experience

² Laura Overton and Jane Daly, *Risk in the C-Suite: It's time to unleash the power of your people* (London: Towards Maturity, 2016): www.towardsmaturity.org/c-suite2016



77% of CEOs are concerned that key skills shortages could impair their company's growth

Highlights from the PWC 20th CEO survey³ has shown that globalization has brought many benefits, but also downsides. With greater convergence has come greater divergence in beliefs, values and systems. CEOs are concerned about uncertain economic growth, over-regulation and skills

shortages. Yet CEOs are surprisingly optimistic about growth: 38% are very confident in their company's 12-month revenue growth prospects.

Trust must also be paramount between supervisors and employees. The contemporary worker is keenly aware of the importance of purpose – and is demanding clarity on not just the "how" of the company, but the "why." Enduring winners will be leaders who develop a two-way relationship – whether with customers, employees, or society at large – based on reliability and ethical behaviour.

Organisations will also have to collaborate with government, educational and vocational institutes and employees to redesign the workforce.

Retaining the human element in a more virtual world will be a prerequisite for future success.

Peter Senge's original vision of an organisation learning and growing together in a systematic way is needed more today, than ever before.

We know so much more than we did 25 years ago – now, we have the evidence to see what's working and what's not. We believe to effect real behavioural change in this new world of work, a future-focused business needs to bring learning and business leaders together to cultivate a 'New Learning Organisation' that delivers both staff and business impact.

Evidence for the New Learning Organisation

Since 2003, the Towards Maturity Benchmark Study has sought to discover which organisations are achieving the *best* results in terms of staff impact and business impact, along with what they are doing differently to achieve those results.

Our evidence has started to show significant increases in the critical areas that the C-suite, leaders and people professionals want to see.

³ PwC, 20th Annual CEO Survey (2017): www.pwc.com/gx/en/ceo-agenda/ceosurvey/2017/gx.html



The **Top Deck**⁴ are starting to show significant results and have helped us shape the New Learning Organisation's definition and characteristics. They are tracking consistently higher business impact against four critical areas; increasing **growth** in a competitive world, improving **productivity**, **profitability** and enabling **transformation**.

Our research with over 600 L&D leaders in the last year alone shows that Top Deck organisations are starting to deliver the results that are critical to business:⁵

Growth

The Top Deck are **three times more likely** to report achieving benefits related to growth in competitive climate. For example, they are 3x as likely to report that learning innovation has resulted in an impact on business innovation (42% vs. 14% rest) and on staff motivation (47% vs. 16%).



Transformation

The Top Deck are **four times more likely** to report achieving benefits to help them respond faster to change (66% vs. 16%) and build the capability of the organisation to solve problems (53% vs. 13%).



Productivity

The Top Deck are **three times more likely** to report achieving benefits linked to improving overall productivity including improving talent strategies to keep their best people (46% vs. 26%) and improving on the job productivity (76% vs. 26%).



Profitability

The Top Deck are **three times more likely** to report achieving benefits related to improved sustainability and profitability including improving customer satisfaction (27% vs. 66%) and overall organisational performance (63% vs. 23%).



⁴ See *Appendix: About this research* for research methodology and definitions

⁵ Unlocking Potential, Appendix C: www.towardsmaturity.org/unlockingpotential



The **Top Deck** are showing increasingly positive and sustainable results. The tactics that correlate to these results help us to identify specific actions that help us achieve them.

The next step for them to advance, is to effectively connect these results in order for the business to see learning as a strategic pillar that drives the four critical areas and adds value.

This is how L&D drives a *New Learning Organisation* (rather than the perception of being a cost-centre and an enabler).

1.3 Why now?

When looking at where sustainable changes in L&D are making a difference, our data provides accurate insights and a wide perspective on corporate learning and how it has changed over time. Since 2003, over 5,500 senior people leaders and 35,000 learners from over 55 countries have participated in Towards Maturity's independent benchmark research, which gives us the opportunity to look at why particular habits make a difference. What are the common characteristics and how can we leverage these to at last cultivate change?

The aim of this report is to provide collective insights that enable all organisations to deliver business impact, people power and increase performance to improve profit, productivity, growth and transformation targets.

We have analysed the behaviours of top learning organisations, along with our data on learners, and connected this with the latest thought leadership on the future of work to understand how these benefits can be delivered and sustained at scale across other organisations

This report will explore the concept of a New Learning Organisation and the six characteristics or habits that define it. Specifically, it will identify roles and accountabilities from within business and from within L&D (and others responsible for developing capability) to help make the outputs of the New Learning Organisation a reality for all.



2 Introducing the New Learning Organisation

The tactics of top performing teams, applied consistently and underpinned by modern professional's standards, point us to six characteristics of the New Learning Organisation that show us Senge's original vision is closer than ever before.

What the evidence tells us is that across L&D, we have high aspirations to make impact. Regrettably, whilst the C-suite, leaders and People professionals are looking for this type of impact, only one in three participants can *quantify* their success.

Top Deck organisations participating in the Towards Maturity Benchmark Study are not perfect, yet they are significantly ahead and moving faster in the right direction.

What they and all of us need to do now, is work smarter and join up the successful elements of what's working. If the Top Deck can increase on the job productivity through learning by 76% (average 26%) and provide a faster response to changing business conditions by 66% (average 19%), imagine what they can do if they connect these successes, sustain these successes and propel these successes.

The New Learning Organisation model provides insight into how we can do this. Defined with modern learning characteristics, traits and habits, it will deliver business impact and set up self-connected, knowledgeable, competent modern learners.

What defines a New Learning Organisation?

Based on the insight and evidence we have seen, Towards Maturity have defined the 'The New Learning Organisation' which is detailed to the right.

Definition of a New Learning Organisation

A living and learning organisational ecosystem that intelligently facilitates the performance and learning of its entire people population, continuously transforming itself. It is agile and fluid in nature, with the ability to move beyond learning interventions by learning at an organisational level.

It is a dynamic and trusted, people-led organisational model that allows people to 'grow and glow' through a common purpose, the respect of knowledge and the analysis, development and acquisition of knowledge, so that it can innovate fast enough to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing environment.



2.1 Six characteristics of the New Learning Organisation



Clarity of Purpose propels people, sustains their impact and binds everything together

As the central connecting characteristic, this is intrinsic to creating a learning culture that impacts business results

Today, the evidence tells us that they key to unlocking full potential and to become a true Learning Organisation all the characteristics need to work together and work in harmony with a clarity of purpose as the golden thread.





 Clarity of Purpose: <u>a shared vision</u> and open dialogue on how people are valued and need to adapt to deliver the organisation's performance.



 Holistic people experience: a trusted brand that keeps to its promises and develops innovative, commercial and continuous learning opportunities.



3. **Thriving ecosystem:** a people-led system that enables its people, teams and the extended enterprise to thrive and learn, linked to common goals.



4. Agile, digitally-enabled infrastructure: a virtual environment that enables a fluid exchange of knowledge, ideas and the adaptation of competence.



 Continual engagement: a dynamic community that continually builds on business relationships, resulting in energy, resilience and growth.



6. Intelligent decision-making: <u>a robust platform</u> using insight and performance analytics to drive organisational performance and customised experience.

Mutual responsibilities of business and learning leaders

Throughout our analysis of top performing organisations, the mutual responsibilities of both business leaders and people professionals have underpinned success. Each of these characteristics reflect the collective opportunity to work together to deliver what is important to individuals and organisations today.

2.2 Supporting the New Learning Organisation – what mindsets need to be established?

Whilst the responsibility for the New Learning Organisation is mutual, as the experts on people, work and change, people professionals have an important role to play in creating a more human future of work, as well as building the New Learning Organisation. In fact, people professionals will have a variety of roles to play.



There are those that deliver day-to-day – using their expertise to focus on driving positive outcomes – who will need to establish new ways of thinking about their role in an increasingly complex work environment. There are also those who will need to play an active part in influencing the future; translating vision into action and shifting mindsets to create sustainable change. One thing, however, is clear; old behaviours, knowledge and attitudes will not equip us for the new world of work and learning.

As the professional body for HR and people development, CIPD research has defined what it means to be a people professional, not just in terms of knowledge but in terms of character, behaviour and the ability to make good judgements.

They have identified several fundamental beliefs and values of the people profession that are distinctive of the profession whilst being supportive of the general principals of good business, and those beliefs fall under three main headings:

- Work Matters
- People Matter
- Professionalism Matters

CIPD's new *Professional Standards Framework* will place these fundamental principles at its core, setting out the knowledge and behaviours which will help people professionals to champion better work and working lives in all they do. Its goal is to create clear standards for HR and L&D professionals at every level, and to define an international gold standard for Chartered members.

Throughout this report, we will highlight examples of contributions (knowledge and behaviours) that might be needed for people professionals to play an active role in delivering and shaping the New Learning Organisation.

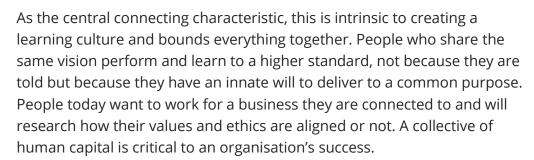
Look out for these boxes for examples of new mindsets required for today's people professionals and have your say at:

www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/future-profession/framework



3 Clarity of Purpose

A <u>shared vision</u> and an open dialogue on how people are valued and need to adapt to deliver the organisation's performance.





Responsibility of business

Leaders who position learning as a strategic pillar, not just an enabler can improve business results.

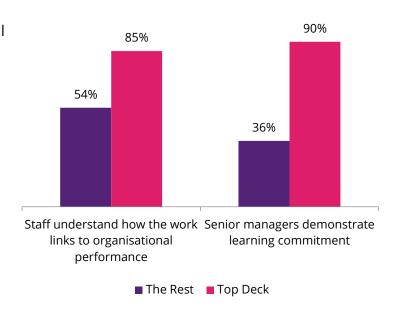
Leaders need to fully understand what a future focused learning proposition looks like and the benefits of changing leadership behaviours to reinforce learning and the New Learning Organisation philosophy. Reward leaders and managers to create a learning culture, because they are the ones who need to drive the impact and learning, not just the people team.

The Top Deck lead the way...

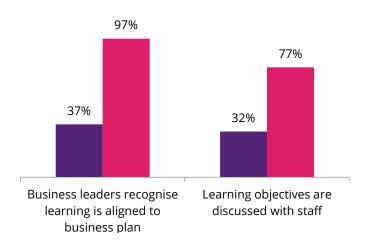
Business leaders who show commitment overall to learning see that commitment will flow through the organisation results in individuals understanding how their work and level of competence is linked to organisational performance.

The Top Deck leaders understand mutual responsibility for clear strategic alignment of more formal learning and the role of business working alongside L&D to ensure that learning is prioritised but also need to take a role in communicating clear objectives.

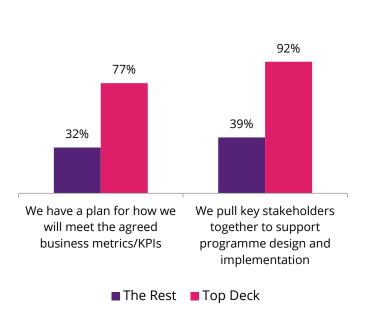
% L&D agree that...











Responsibility of L&D

L&D have high aspirations and want to be taken seriously, but need to create mutual and effective partnerships with business leaders to drive a strategy that reinforces a learning culture. L&D teams impacting results in the New Learning Organisation environment need to build a shared and collective learning vision – a practice of unearthing shared pictures of the future that foster genuine commitment and enrolment, rather than compliance.

The second graph (left) shows that Top Deck L&D teams take alignment to business seriously. They are not only more likely to agree that the strategy is lined up with the purpose of the organisation, but agree their team understands the strategy, plans and priorities – along with a plan for achieving their goals. It is concerning that on average, only 3 in 5 agree in general that activity is linked up and only half of them have a proactive plan.

Ensuring clarity of purpose is a role of L&D leaders across and one of the ways that Top Deck is doing this is by bringing stakeholders together. This graph shows the Top Deck are significantly ahead. Alarming that only a third agree in general that they have a plan for meeting the agreed business metrics.

In terms of shared mindset, the box out following shows examples of shared standards that will be required to deliver the New Learning Organisation.



Shared mindsets that help us deliver clarity of purpose

- ► Individuals and line managers work together to set goals and find exciting opportunities that meet individual needs, encouraging them to take accountability for their own development
- ► The organisation is treated as a living system that works together to adapt to emerging technology and the changing workforce to deliver success

Have your say at:

www.cipd.co.uk/news-views/future-profession/framework

"The New Learning Organisation and the characteristics resonate with how we are building learning at Tesco. Two years ago, we reviewed our proposition and realised the opportunity and appetite for a new approach to colleague learning and as a result, we introduced the concept of the 'Productpedia'.

The results of our 'Learning Landscape' survey with Towards Maturity demonstrated that we had to change, transform our mind-set and move our content from face-to-face to digital. The survey allowed the Product Capability team to influence the business by benchmarking and discovering our plans for increasing impact and our longer term aspirations.

We are already seeing the benefits of thinking and driving a learning organisation. We are making decisions based on our insights from the hub, on a monthly basis we feedback usage and unique page views and our leaders are then feeding this back to colleagues. This would never of been possible if we did not have 'Productpedia' set up to enable us to 'learn' from the business.

There is so much more to leverage from learning and so much more to come from us now we have built a strong foundation."

'Productpedia' Sara Matthews, Product Capability, Tesco





4 Holistic People Experience

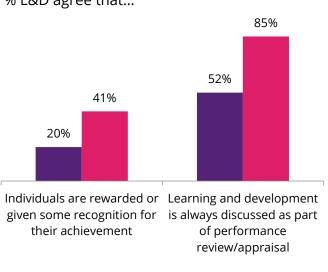
A <u>trusted brand</u> that keeps to its promises and develops innovative, commercial and continuous learning opportunities.

Trust takes a long time to build, but a moment to break. Creating a lean but effective people experience will save time and money, build trust and drive loyalty. The people experience journey should be given expert focus and the same level of investment as the customer experience, because like customers, employees are valuable and can directly increase their value through commitment, work and competence.

Responsibility of business

Business leaders play a critical role in the people experience journey and have the most impact on whether it works. Leaders need to drive people to learn by doing and reward innovative initiatives. Leaders complain about their people risks, but rarely hold up a mirror on how their own behaviour impacts them. People learn the most when they implement their knowledge to generate meaningful business results. Allow people to make mistakes (and learn), by providing a safe environment to do this. People never take risks if they are penalised for them.

% L&D agree that...



■ The Rest ■ Top Deck

The Top Deck lead the way...

Business leaders who are on the front foot and have recognised the value of the holistic people experience, are formally rewarding and recognising commitment to learning and thus, achieving sustainable results.

Bringing learning into every performance discussion, drives significant value. However, it is concerning that half of leaders are still not achieving this.



Succession and talent planning is happening, but how many leaders are communicating to their people how they are viewed, and how this fits into the development plan?

Leaders who do, are **four times** more likely to achieve results.

Advances in Neuroscience tell us people need 'mind-space' to learn, leaders taking the initiative here and openly communicating how reflection is valued are **three times** more likely to sustain learning.

Responsibility of L&D

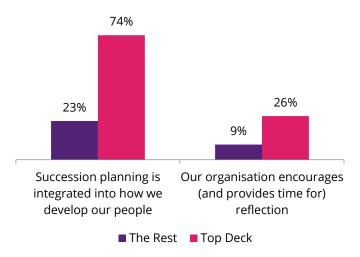
L&D teams need to create a supportive learning environment and learning journeys that add value to the people experience (Learner experience/LX and interface/LI). A supportive learning environment takes learning to people in an agile and aligned way. Learning journeys should be designed to improve job specific competencies and allow people to see how they impact business results by being more productive and adaptive, if necessary.

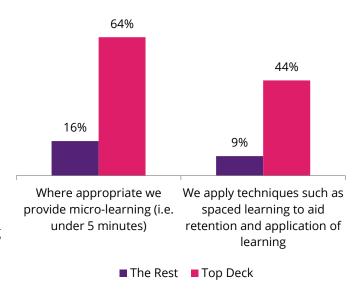
Operate a 70:20:10 model. People learn when they get to ask why, people become competent when they practice, gain feedback, learn and practice against the *what* and the *how*.

There is no doubt that L&D have high aspirations and want to drive speed to competence, but how often do they consider the actual 'experience' and journey, rather than the learning event and content itself?

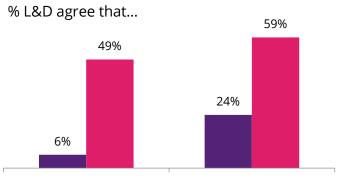
The Top Deck are significantly ahead in knowing and driving competence levels that impact the four critical business levers that leaders want.

% L&D agree that...









We use defined performance We provide learners will realsupport practices to support time feedback on progress learning transfer after formal training

■ The Rest ■ Top Deck

What do learners say?

4 in 5 employees say they know what they need to learn...so what motivates them to learn online?

- ► 69% learn online to do their job better and faster
- ▶ 65% because they just like to learn
- ► 45% want to better their chances of promotion

However, 40% can't find what they need.

L&D have a responsibility to educate and upskill the business to understand the benefits of how to embed learning, their accountabilities and how the holistic experience and the journey (not just the event itself) drives results.

It is concerning that only 6% of the rest of the sample know how to define this, insisting the business takes responsibility for embedding the transfer of learning.

Our Learner Voice 3 research, with over 4,700 employees at all levels of responsibility and role, show that staff are open to being self-directed learners. They are seeking online opportunities to learn how do their jobs better and faster, also investigating how to progress their career.

However, one of their biggest challenges (apart from time) is that they struggle to find what they need.

Several new mindsets will be critical to delivering a holistic experience to these staff – see below for examples:

Shared mindsets that help us deliver a holistic people experience

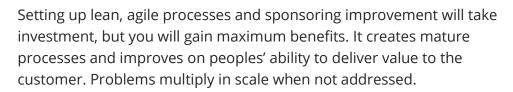
- ▶ We encourage individual and collective employability by ensuring skills and knowledge are continuously developed to be fit for future inside and outside of the organisation
- ► We encourage employability across sectors by exploring new ways to extend career paths that build individual strengths and contribute to the future

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5 Thriving ecosystem

A <u>people-led system</u> that enables its people, teams and the extended enterprise to thrive and learn, linked to common goals.





Responsibly of business and the extended enterprise

An extended ecosystem helps teams operate at their best. Business leaders can establish habits that reinforce a learning ecosystem (e.g. at team meetings, discuss and track what worked well, what could be better and what we learned). Incorporate learning into your processes and enterprise / partnership meetings.

The Top Deck lead the way...

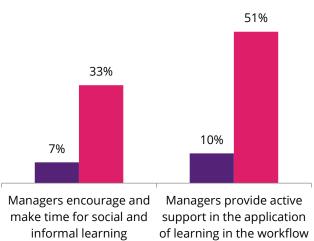
Top Deck line managers are **five times as likely** to proactively encourage learning between peers and support the application of learning in the heart of the workflow than the rest.

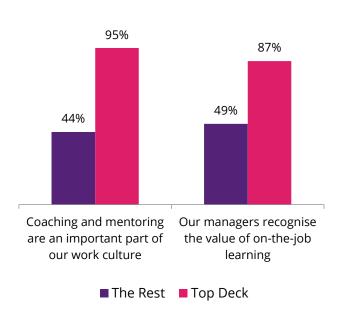
Furthermore, leaders and managers that understand the value of connecting staff to each other and to new experiences in which to practice are reaping the rewards. However, it is concerning that only 10% of non-Top-Deck L&D leaders report that their managers support learning at the point of need.

Coaching and mentoring are not new to business, but often they are only used for the 'elite'. Leaders who see the value in these practices are **twice more likely** to achieve results.

The line coach (not the line manager) who sees the value of integrating learning and work

% L&D agree that...







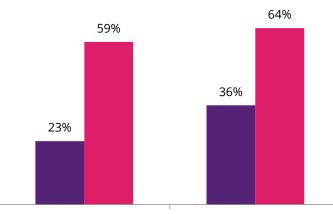
through coaching, mentoring, reverse mentoring, teaming and experiential opportunities into their team culture is ahead of the curve.

Responsibility of L&D

L&D professionals play a critical role within the ecosystem; they need to involve business leaders, subject experts and people in the learning cycle, design and engagement. Align the learning governance process with the business ecosystem.

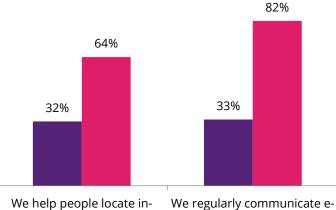
L&D have a responsibility to equip the business with the knowledge, tools

% L&D agree that...



We equip line managers with resources so their teams get the most out of technology

We provide people with the means to prove competency for their job



house experts when they need them

We regularly communicate elearning successes to line managers and supervisors

■ The Rest ■ Top Deck

and expertise so they can support their people to thrive. Often, L&D needs to get out of the way of embedding the learning, but they can only do this if the business is set up for success.

It is concerning that our spend on technology within L&D continues to be significant, but L&D are not equipping line managers to drive innovative and technology-enabled learning.

L&D within Top Deck organisations are consistently ahead when it comes to being part of the ecosystem and utilising it – they are **three times more likely** to connect and communicate results.

It is concerning that only one third are achieving simple but effective ways of connecting business and learning impact.

Our Learner Voice research shows that staff are connecting, collaborating and engaging with each other to learn what they need to do their job. They also agree that their managers and peers have the most influence on their engagement with learning, particularly online.



The standards we set for delivering a thriving ecosystem (see examples below) will be critical to the success of the New Learning Organisation:

Shared mindsets that help us deliver a thriving ecosystem

- ► Individuals are actively encouraged to contribute to and leverage their personal and professional networks, challenging others' thinking
- ► Leaders actively create connections with people in power both inside and outside of the organisation to champion change

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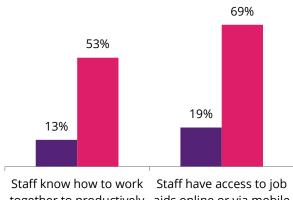


6 Agile, digitally-enabled infrastructure

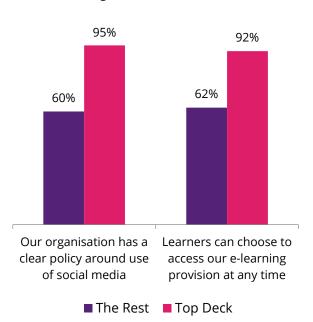
A <u>virtual environment</u> that enables a fluid exchange of knowledge, ideas and the adaptation of competence.

Improvement does not always need to be costly. Forming small focus groups to improve the infrastructure in small iterations. Significant results mean you can invest more. This type of environment is critical in business today.

% L&D agree that...



Staff know how to work Staff have access to job together to productively aids online or via mobile connect and share devices knowledge



Accountability of business

Leaders must influence, shape, transform and ultimately utilise technology. Leaders should also expose their teams to diverse learning resources to accelerate learning and ensure accessibility of knowledge.

The Top Deck lead the way...

Business leaders in Top Deck organisations are starting to see the value of technology, using digital channels to enable knowledge sharing and transfer. There is still a long way to go, but the first graph (left) highlights missed opportunities of the leaders who are not taking initiative. It's no wonder that the C-suite cite digital as one of their top three risks.

Technology is one of our biggest challenges in business today – keeping up with it, utilising it and getting frustrated when it's not working. Leaders who invest in driving learning opportunities via virtual environments are seeing significant results.

Leaders need to champion policies and give learning a voice to create the change needed. Leaners tell us they want to get better at their job and better utilise discretionary effort, by making learning opportunities available 24/7.



Responsibility of L&D

L&D's role in influencing the policy on technology-related learning resources is critical.

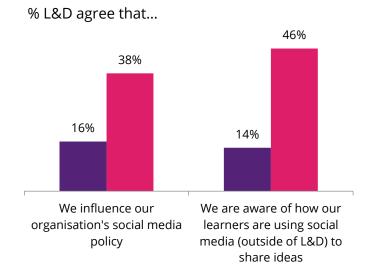
L&D teams who are equipped for the future approach learning with the end in mind, utilising all available learning mediums to create an agile, digitally-enabled shift in competency.

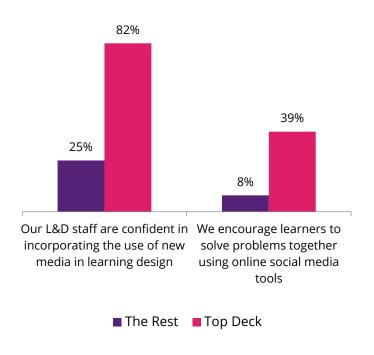
The top graph (right) highlights the critical role of L&D, showing how far L&D needs to go. This is a great example of how L&D can play a role in shaping an agile learning environment. Social media is a core part of learning today, but are L&D equipped to influence the business?

It is concerning that only 14% of non-Top-Deck teams are aware how their learners are using social media to share ideas.

L&D professionals are learners too. It's encouraging to see how the Top Deck are taking the initiative – they are over **three times more likely** to agree that they are competent in the use of new media in learning.

Although collaboration through social media is not new, L&D teams are not actively taking the opportunity to encourage the business to help themselves. The business needs support, but the L&D function can only do this if it has the insight, competence and confidence to.







Overall, an agile learning organisation is not just about the technology, but the skill and mindsets that allow technology to support the bringing of the right people together at the right time, to solve the right problems for the organisation – this involves a mindset change for people professionals and business leaders alike:

Shared mindsets that help us deliver an agile, digitally-enabled infrastructure

- Organisations pursue agile work, forming teams with the right mix of skills, personalities and technology that brings the best out of people – increasing their individual satisfaction, commitment and well-being
- ➤ The right people, with the right skills, are in the right place and have access to the right technology to achieve great things

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"What do the top L&D leaders say about the New Learning Organisation? Agile, digital and disruptive...the three words I hear (and probably use) almost every day single day.

When you add in the latest buzzwords...gamification, virtual reality, micro-learning...it's easy to feel like your L&D function is behind the times if you're not being or implementing these things at this very moment.

The expectations of L&D seem to be higher than ever, making us work harder as we strive to make things simpler for our learners."

Curators, Consultants and Collaborators – Peter Yarrow Global Head of Personal and Professional Growth, Standard Life



7 Continual engagement

<u>A dynamic community</u> that continually builds on business relationships – resulting in energy, resilience and growth.

Engagement is not just communication is about building a relationship. Learning from engagement is a masterclass in developing and communicating the employee value proposition.

Continually engaging the business is key to the success of embedding learning and one size does *not* fit all. Leaders, business areas and the workforce will all need different strategies in the same way that need different learning interventions. Engagement is an art – enlisting the expertise of the right people will be the key to success.



Leaders need to invest in engagement and build storytelling opportunities. Learning is about sharing lessons, telling stories, doing, making mistakes and improving constantly. The need for leaders to model this agenda and harness these opportunities into daily habits is critical.

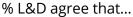
The Top Deck lead the way...

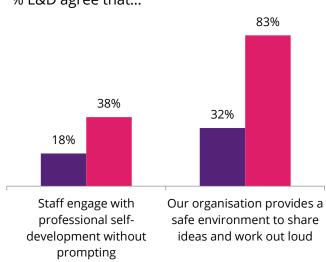
Business leaders from the Top Deck organisations are **more than twice as likely** to encourage working out loud.

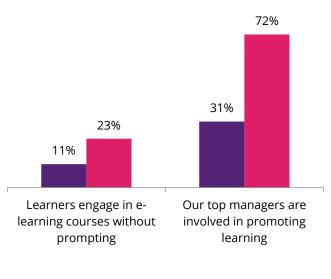
It is concerning that there is still a long way to reach a self-directed culture, but encouraging to see the Top Deck starting to reap positive results as individuals engage and connect.

Top Deck teams are **over twice as likely** to promote learning. Where they do, the Top Deck report staggering results, such as a **24% faster rollout of change**.

Investment in online learning is critical for business today, but so is setting up learners for success – this includes creating a self-directed culture.



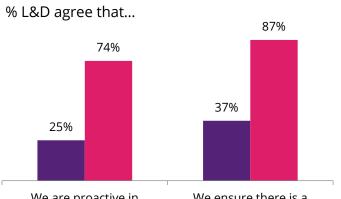




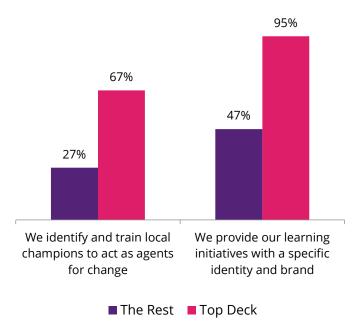


Responsibility of L&D

Building an L&D brand and relationship is a top priority for future-focused people and learning teams. Creating a signature brand that works across all aspects of L&D requires expertise – this is where people professionals should utilise the experts in their business, within branding, marketing, communications etc. Collating insights and feedback on the success of the brand is also critical.



We are proactive in We ensure there is a understanding how learners communication plan in place currently learn and what they for all key stakeholders need to do their job



The top graph (left) shows how vital it is for L&D to upskill themselves in the core elements of engagement.

The Top Deck are significantly ahead, reporting results that light up business leaders, like **staff motivation (47% vs. 16% rest)**.

However, when it comes to developing a resilient community, only a quarter of non-Top-Deck L&D teams are proactive in understanding how their staff learn and engage.

L&D leaders driving a New Learning Organisation need new skills – it is encouraging to see the Top Deck utilising marketing skills – they are **over twice as likely** to create a brand for L&D.

Engagement should be driven across multiple mediums and channels. What better way to amplify the voice of learning than through champions (left). It is concerning that only a quarter of non-Top-Deck L&D teams are making use of this engagement technique.



"Learning should be at the heart of what we do.

For many organisations with ambitious goals, learning is often seen as an important nice to do, but a 'nice to do' all the same. Ensuring learning is within the DNA of the organisation and reinforcing the meaningful connection of learning to achieving organisational goals, gives less of a 'nice to do' and more of a 'must do'. We want it to become 'we just do'."

"To say we have achieved the 'we just do' position would be untrue. We are on a journey and to achieve the 'we just do' requires time. However, the practice of creating the behavioural framework through collaboration across the organisation, at all levels, embedding learning within these values, and connecting these to the core purpose of the organisation, has catapulted learning into the heart of the BHF."

Putting Learning at the Heart – Julie Jones Head of Talent and Organisational Development, British Heart Foundation

Shared mindsets that help us deliver continual engagement

- Organisations agree that making time for personal development is important, with opportunities that match an individual's expectations and their role, impacting organisational performance
- ► An organisation-wide learning mindset means that leaders are key players in sector conversations about building capability for the future, by matching individuals to opportunities that will drive competitive advantage

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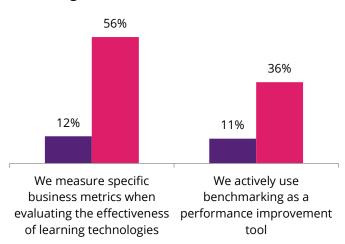


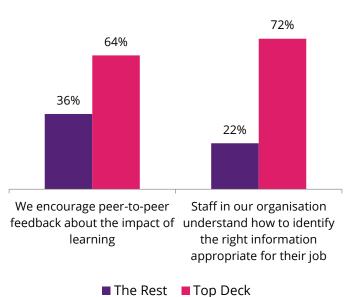
8 Intelligent decision-making

<u>A robust platform</u> using insight and performance analytics to drive organisational performance and a customised experience.

Insight and data can be overwhelming, so starting small and building up will support leaders and builders as they become more experienced. Bring insights and data to life by drawing out patterns and trends – connect the dots by telling stories with the data. For example, you could use an After-Action Review (AAR) process, now widely used by many companies, which involves a systematic debriefing after every mission, project, or critical activity. This process is framed by four simple questions: What did we set out to do? What happened? Why did it happen? What do we do next time (which activities do we sustain, and which do we improve)?

% L&D agree that...





Responsibility of business

Leaders should actively involve people in important change initiatives. Support them to learn and connect with others to learn about managing change. Learning is tacit and visible only through results delivered by people, so therefore a tangible and intangible balance should be communicated. Intangible feedback can be drawn out from forums, social mediums, one-to-one's etc.

The Top Deck lead the way...

It is encouraging to see over half of the Top Deck reporting that they are aligning with business metrics, but concerning that only 12% of the rest are considering the business impact of learning technologies (top left).

Improving performance is only possible if you know what you're aiming for. Towards Maturity provides the world's largest evidence base for learning benchmarks – and the Top Deck are **three times more likely** to utilise these.

Savvy leaders have bought into insight and big data, knowing the value this can add.



Insight comes from people too – like customers, people in business are valuable. Top Deck leaders are seeing the benefits of learning and acting on insights. It is concerning that non-Top-Deck L&D leaders are not taking their accountabilities seriously – only 22% of them agree that staff know how to access the right information for their job (previous page).

Responsibility of L&D

This is a crucial area for people and learning professionals and a growing expectation from business leaders. Utilise people analytics and link the New Learning Organisation results to the balanced scorecard. Insight and analytics should form part of the learning cycle and are particularly critical at the learning needs analysis stage – start with the business metric that the learning is going to impact (e.g. Profit, productivity, growth or transformation).

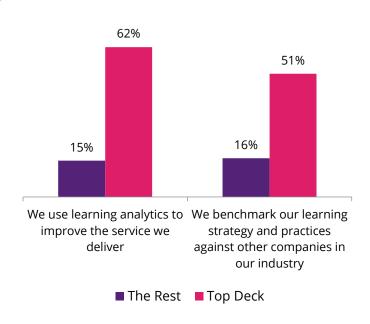
This graph (right) highlights the importance of intelligent decision-making and the need for L&D to upskill themselves in the appropriate skills.

It is concerning that only 21% of non-Top-Deck teams take the opportunity to explore high-performing behaviours within their own culture.

Market intelligence is a core element of business today. For L&D teams, intelligence on our 'market' is vital. It is encouraging to see the Top Deck starting to drive more advanced strategies for this. The Top Deck have recognised the importance of listening first before acting and are four times more likely to utilise learning analytics.

L&D are often disconnected from learners, but there is a huge opportunity to bring themselves up to date with the skills, confidence and competence required in this area.







What do learners say?	What does L&D say?
82% of employees know what they need to learn to do their job	62% of L&D believe their staff lack skills to manage their own learning
78% say support from managers is essential or very useful to learn what they need	26% of L&D equip line managers to help their teams get the most from learning
48% use their personal mobiles to download work-related apps	18% of L&D are using native mobile apps to support learning at the point of need
35% say uninspiring content is a barrier to learning online	7 in 10 offer e-learning custom made in house, but only 34% have the necessary digital content development skills

Shared mindsets that help us deliver intelligent decision-making

When it comes to complex and ambiguous situations people professionals at different levels of their career need to be:

- ► Comfortable with monitoring accuracy of analysis and interpretation
- ► Able to use internal and external data to develop insights that enable a proactive response to change

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9 Conclusions / Next Steps

The New Learning Organisation is built on the evidence of the Towards Maturity Model.

Business leaders and L&D leaders that are serious about impacting results need learning to become a strategic pillar and drive the six characteristics.

The Top Deck are significantly leading the way, unlocking potential and impacting the four critical business results that matter to leaders; profitability, productivity, growth and transformation.

Utilise the following tips to cultivate your own New Learning Organisation and ask yourself these three key questions:

- **1.** What skills does L&D need to support the New Learning Organisation?
- 2. What mindsets need to change?
- **3.** How do we change current L&D skills and mindsets?





What can business leaders do now?

Develop a 'Learning Organisation' mindset. Raise awareness of what success looks like and set strategic goals to map your long-term learning culture priorities.

Influence a mindset shift across the organisation and establish learning as a strategic pillar e.g. Track, analyse and communicate what you have learnt and how your 'Learning Organisation' increases people's experience, competence and business results e.g. by increasing profit, profitability, by improving growth and transformation.

Establish a culture of tactical Learning Organisation language (e.g. daily habits set by line managers to communicate exciting opportunities for self-driven learning linked to the 'Learning Organisation' priorities).

What can learning leaders do now?

Develop a 'Learning Organisation' mindset and influence a mindset shift across people professionals.

Influence leaders to drive a 'Learning Organisation' and Collaborate with leaders to agree, track, analyse and communicate how learning adds value to the four most important commercial levers (e.g. by increasing profitability and productivity, improving growth and bringing transformation).

Practice and communicate tactical, daily habits to reinforce a learning culture and provide ongoing support to the business; creating a learning culture change takes time to be sustainable.



What can business leaders do now?

Demand a holistic people experience that adds value to the balanced scorecard / the four most important commercial levers (increased profitability, productivity, growth and transformation).

Influence a connected people experience based on the business results you desire.

Reward leaders and managers who incorporate an improvement of the people experience, based on business impact and added value.

What can learning leaders do now?

Encourage and influence commercially driven individual and collective employability: Ensure knowledge and competence is continually developed to be fit for the future, inside and outside the organisation.

Professionalise the expertise of L&D: apply the principles of the new CIPD professional standards, increase qualifications and competence.

Work out loud: audit the L&D team's commercial effectiveness (e.g. does it offer a holistic experience that adds value?) and act on the insight by communicating any necessary changes.







Thriving Ecosystem

What can business leaders do now?

Understand, influence and streamline the ecosystem so that it adds value to the four most important commercial levers (e.g. map inside, outside, B2B, end to end supply chain etc.).

Incorporate learning into processes and meetings, influencing on relevant technology to support learning at the point of need (accumulate, analyse and communicate value added business patterns and trends).

Reward daily habits that reinforce a learning culture / ecosystem and add value to the four most important commercial levers (e.g. at team meetings discuss and track what worked well, what could be better and what we learned).

What can learning leaders do now?

Utilise connections and influence how the ecosystem works by actively driving a people-led system that encourages individuals to contribute to and leverage their personal and professional networks.

Track, analyse and report on how the learning and thriving ecosystem adds value to the four most important commercial levers.

Encourage leaders and managers to create connections with people in power, both inside and outside the organisation, to champion change.



What can business leaders do now?

Support people professionals / L&D to develop a strategy that utilises and leverages the infrastructure. Influence IT, data, marketing departments etc. to also support people professionals, where you can see commercial opportunities.

Highlight relevant technology that supports learning at the point of need. Encourage social learning, model learning communities.

Become a learner of tech-savvy skills and utilise networking opportunities (e.g. using social media and making videos with mobile devices).

What can learning leaders do now?

Collaborate on, create and communicate a strategy that utilises and leverages the infrastructure by partnering with leadership, IT, data, finance, marketing etc. to support networking and sharing.

Create networking opportunities, relationships and connections; informal and formal. Encourage the creation of sharing hubs where there are limitations.

Develop the skills within L&D: Nuture leaders' and learners' tech-savvy skills (e.g. using social media and making videos with mobile devices).



Agile, Digitally-Enabled Infrastructure





Continual Engagement

What can business leaders do now?

Drive line managers to coach their teams to learn (e.g. coach those who develop insights that enable a proactive response to change).

Integrate learning and work: coach leaders connect, network and share what they are interested in (not just work-related) to build trust.

Create an organisation-wide learning mindset that leaders can drive conversations about, building capability for the future by matching individuals to opportunities that will drive competitive advantage.

What can learning leaders do now?

Develop an effective 'brand' for the holistic people experience (e.g. around talent, learning engagement, products, reporting etc.)

Curate simple, continually innovative and inspiring learning news and content (e.g. encourage people to share best practice and use communities of practice, sharing what they've learned). Define any competence risks and find out how they want to learn.

Integrate learning and work: help learners connect, network and share to what they are interested in; not just work-related to build trust.

Influence an organisation-wide learning mindset that supports leaders to drive conversations about building capability for the future by matching individuals to opportunities that will drive competitive advantage.



What can business leaders do now?

Influence competence in developing insight and leveraging performance analytics (e.g. what do leaders *need*?)

Influence the talent pipeline and future skills plan, utilising insight and introducing performance analytics.

Demand that the impact of learning is reported in line with the four critical business levers – profit, productivity, growth and transformation.

Influence the mindsets of leaders who still see learning as a cost centre.

What can learning leaders do now?

Get comfortable with using, monitoring and interpreting analytics software and data (e.g. increase team competence in developing insight from and leveraging performance analytics).

Develop some learner personas and define your learning landscape. What resources are needed to support learning? Involve learners in this process.

Make the talent pipeline and future skills plan robust by widening the insight to the whole business and introducing performance analytics, if they are not already in place.

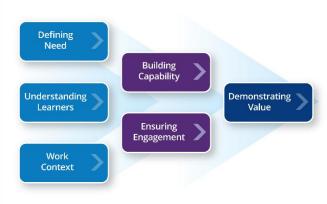
Agree which metrics demonstrate learning transfer, competence and time to competence. Make sure leaders report on these metrics.





Appendix: About this research

Since 2003, Towards Maturity's Benchmark Study has explored the L&D profession's vision for the future of learning and their tactics for achieving it. It considers drivers for learning and performance support, the barriers faced, the technologies used and their plan of action for achieving those goals and the extent to which goals have been achieved.



The Towards Maturity Model

Benchmark reviews with over 5,500 organisations over the past 13 years have highlighted six key areas that contribute to accelerating performance of L&D. These six effective practice workstreams are described in the Towards Maturity Model™ and the extent of their practice in an organisation is measured by the Towards Maturity Index (TMI), the unique single score that organisations can use to benchmark their progress.

Organisations who are in the top 10% (the Top Deck) of the Towards Maturity Index consistently report better business results than their peers. Compared with those in the bottom quartile of the index, they are:

- ▶ **11x** more likely to report that interventions are improving the capability of organisations to solve problems
- ➤ **7x** more likely to report their ability to respond faster to changing business conditions
- ➤ **7x** more likely to report an increased ongoing sharing of good practice

This report draws on four main sources:

- ► The Towards Maturity Benchmark Study: comparing results from over 600 L&D leaders who took part in the 2016 research, with a similar sized sample who took part five years earlier in 2010/11
- ► The Towards Maturity Learning Landscape: results from over 4,700 employees on how they learn what they need to do their job
- ▶ The CIPD New Professional standards
- ► Inspirational leading people / learning leaders



About the CIPD



We're the CIPD – the professional body for HR and people development. We are the voice of a worldwide community of 140,000 members committed to championing better work and working lives.

We've been setting the benchmark for excellence in people and organisation development for more than 100 years. Through our expertise and research, we provide a valuable point of view on the rapidly changing world of work. And for our members we're the career partner of choice, setting professional standards and providing the expertise to drive the HR and L&D professions forward.

As part of our commitment to help L&D professionals access thought leadership, fresh ideas, and examples of innovation, we have created the Future of HR and Learning hub. It's an online community providing curated bite-sized content about latest industry trends, research and skills, lively discussion forums and monthly expert webinars. Plus, it forms part of the award-winning digital CIPD qualifications that CIPD Enterprises offer in partnership with online learning providers, AVADO.

More details about the Future of HR and Learning hub can be found at: www.cipd.co.uk/future-learning.

 $\label{thm:could} \mbox{\sc Visit www.cipd.co.uk for more information.}$

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About Towards Maturity

Towards Maturity is an independent benchmarking practice that provides authoritative research and expert advisory services to help assess and improve the effectiveness and consistency of L&D performance within organisations. The Towards Maturity portfolio includes:

The Towards Maturity Benchmark Study™

www.towardsmaturity.org/benchmark

The Towards Maturity Benchmark Study is an internationally recognised longitudinal study on the effective implementation of learning innovation based on the input of 5,500 organisations and 35,000 learners over 12 years. Towards Maturity continuously studies how people learn at work. This data is used to help L&D leaders assess and improve the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of their learning provision. Review your own learning strategy using our online Benchmark Centre and receive a Personalised Benchmark Report.

Towards Maturity Strategic Review[™]

www.towardsmaturity.org/strategy

The Towards Maturity Strategic Review is a deeper analysis and comparison of your Benchmark against those who are already utilising learning innovation to deliver bottom line results and success. It helps you analyse and interpret your Personalised Benchmark Report to establish a baseline and identify priority actions for performance improvement within your organisation.

Towards Maturity Learning Landscape™

www.towardsmaturity.org/learners

The Towards Maturity Learning Landscape provides critical insights to help you understand the behaviours of your staff so you can design learning solutions that can be embedded more effectively into the workflow. It supports new learning technology strategies whilst mitigating risk when introducing new programmes or models of learning.

Towards Maturity Sector Benchmark Groups™

www.towardsmaturity.org/community

Join senior L&D leaders in your sector three times a year to use the Towards Maturity Benchmark to support performance improvement, prioritise action planning and accelerate progress. Membership supports accelerated results, strategic insights, while creating an invaluable opportunity to network.

Visit www.towardsmaturity.org for more information.

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Tel: +44 (0) 208 545 2630