



L&D in 2025:

Why Companies Are Betting Big
on Microlearning

RESEARCH BRIEF
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Executive Summary

Microlearning delivers clear wins for corporate training, with hard data proving its impact. Companies are going all in – two-thirds (67%) intend to increase their microlearning investment in 2025, according to the Brandon Hall Group™ study, *HCM Outlook 2025*.

Teams that adopt microlearning cut training time and slash development costs. The impact hits many different metrics: projects finish faster, and employees master skills in less time. From retail to nuclear power, these gains show up across many industries.

AI supercharges these results, transforming how companies build and deliver training. The impact shows up everywhere - in faster development, better content, and stronger results.

But these gains matter most when you look at the current challenges facing Learning and Development (L&D) teams. The data reveals why traditional approaches simply can't deliver what modern businesses need -- and why organizations must change.



Current State of Learning and Development

Traditional learning approaches no longer meet modern business needs. The Brandon Hall Group™ Learning and Development Benchmarking Study shows that nearly half of organizations can't measure if training works (48%). Just as many struggle to build skills fast enough to meet business demands. Budget constraints affect 42% of learning departments. Staff shortages hit another 34%.

The research points to three problems worsening this crisis:



Traditional training ignores how people actually work. One-third of employees now work remotely, so classroom-based training no longer reaches the full workforce effectively. Organizations must deliver consistent learning experiences to distributed teams while maintaining quality and engagement.



The costs are staggering. Companies spend as much as \$250 per hour developing learning content. A typical in-person class can cost \$14,000 and take up to 57 hours to build.



Meanwhile, skills become outdated faster than ever. Only 35% of businesses can keep up with market changes through learning. Just 25% connect their training to actual revenue growth.

Companies need a better way. That's why they're turning to microlearning - it solves these problems while delivering clear, measurable results.

How Microlearning Improves L&D

Microlearning fixes three problems at once: slow development, high costs, and poor skill application.

It accelerates content development, cutting traditional timelines by up to 80% while improving quality. AI integration further reduces costs - slashing translation expenses by up to 80% and boosting delivery efficiency by 55%, based on Brandon Hall Group™ qualitative data from Excellence Awards case studies.

The greatest impact emerges in daily work. The research shows that leading firms that integrate microlearning into workflows achieve 25-35% better content personalization. Process efficiency improves by 30-40%, while system maintenance costs drop 50-60%. This shifts resources from technical upkeep to strategic learning initiatives.



Business Impact: EBSCO Case Studies

These numbers translate into real business value. Organizations across industries are achieving measurable results that impact their bottom line:

A Fortune 100 insurance company built a smarter way to develop talent using EBSCO Accel's tiered learning strategy. They provided foundational content to all employees while reserving specialized management training and executive-level Harvard Business Review content for specific roles. Everyone got exactly what they needed, and the company achieved targeted development across the organization.

A major grocery chain put learning right into the work day with a focus on immediate skill application. Their implementation emphasized practical customer service and operational skills. The approach generated learning conversations between shifts, enabling regional managers, store managers, and frontline workers to apply new knowledge immediately. This practical focus resulted in faster skill development and improved decision-making throughout their operations.

In the highly regulated nuclear power industry, a professional association used microlearning to develop future leaders across more than 20 utilities. Their five-week program targeted specific competencies required for plant managers, VPs, and chief nuclear officers. By focusing on essential skills like trust-building and decision-making, they achieved precise leadership development aligned with the industry's unique safety and risk management demands.

The lesson is clear:

Microlearning works because it changes how people learn and how they apply knowledge in their daily work.

The Role of Technology

Technology transforms how organizations create, deliver, and measure learning content. Data from the Brandon Hall Group™ Learning Revolution Study reveals widespread adoption: 94% of organizations use web/video conferencing platforms, 89% employ learning management systems, and 75% utilize dedicated microlearning platforms.

While learning technology adoption may be today's standard, success really depends on how companies use them. Businesses that integrate AI, for example, cut content development time drastically and eliminate most translation costs. Their training becomes up to 35% more relevant to each employee's actual work. Yet barriers to adoption remain. Privacy concerns affect 59%, many lack AI expertise, and 44% face regulatory hurdles.

The momentum continues regardless. Organizations are prioritizing three areas: video platform creation (75% planning adoption), AR/VR platforms (73%), and coaching/mentoring platforms (48%). These investments show where learning technology is heading -- more visual, more immersive, and more personalized.

As technology reshapes learning delivery, L&D teams must rethink how they work.

Impact on L&D Teams

Modern learning tools change how L&D teams work - but most aren't ready. Six in ten (59%) lack the expertise and knowledge of AI needed to adopt AI for learning, the Learning Revolution Study revealed.

The upside? Teams that master these AI-enabled tools spend 60-80% less time on routine content development. AI handles the grunt work, freeing L&D professionals to focus on strategy instead of administrative tasks. L&D teams face specific challenges in this transition. Most teams (80%) struggle to balance short-term priorities with long-term strategies. Collaboration across functions impacts 56%, while budget management and resistance to change each affect 49% of teams.

But the payoff goes beyond better training. As L&D teams adapt to new roles and responsibilities, they spark something bigger - a culture where employees drive their own learning. This cultural shift represents one of microlearning's most significant long-term benefits, and leading organizations are already seeing the results.

Creating a Self-Development Culture

Today's high-performing organizations understand a fundamental truth: learning works best when employees drive it. The Learning Revolution research shows 62% favor microlearning over traditional training, with three-quarters already using microlearning platforms. They're doubling down too – most firms intend to spend more on microlearning in the coming year.

This change reflects a deeper understanding of how modern workforces learn. Businesses recognize that tomorrow's learners demand different approaches - 47% place a high priority on meeting these next-generation learning needs, and 90% consider it at least a moderately important priority.

Top performers build three things into their learning culture:

- 01 Immediate practice** - people apply new skills right away
- 02 Constant reinforcement** - learning sticks through repetition
- 03 Employee ownership** - people drive their own growth

This cultural shift delivers measurable results. The secret is to make learning part of the job, not separate from it. Give employees access to knowledge when they need it.

Integration into Workflow

When organizations embed learning into daily work, employees show dramatic improvements in skill mastery and project completion rates. Real success stories prove why this works.

When employees control their learning:



People master skills

45%

faster



Projects finish

30%

sooner



Teams work

40%

more efficiently

Take the Fortune 100 insurance company that transformed how its employees learn. Instead of pulling people away for training, they put learning directly into the workflow through EBSCOlearning's Accel platform. Customer service representatives access quick video guides and focused articles while handling cases. Managers reinforce learning during team meetings. Skills improve because learning happens during work, not instead of it.

A major grocery retailer scaled this approach across thousands of employees. They turned shift changes into learning opportunities. Regional managers, store managers, and frontline workers share insights and apply them immediately. This immediate application transforms theoretical knowledge into practical skills.

Source: Brandon Hall Group™ Excellence Awards Case Study data



Future Direction

Microlearning isn't just growing - it's becoming the backbone of corporate learning. As shown by the adoption rates presented earlier, organizations are now prioritizing technologies that make learning more engaging, immersive, and personalized.

AI integration amplifies these gains beyond the cost and efficiency improvements. AI's greatest impact comes through personalized learning at scale - delivering the right content to the right person at the right time. This approach builds adaptable, high-performing teams.

Making it work demands a systematic implementation strategy.

Implementation Framework

Want microlearning to work? Success needs a plan.

01

Know Your Starting Point

Before diving in, look at the amount of time and money you already spend to develop courses. Map this against your current capabilities to check your readiness:

- ◆ Content creation tools and processes
- ◆ Technology infrastructure
- ◆ Team skills and capacity
- ◆ Current learning effectiveness metrics

With baseline measures established, organizations can begin building their foundation.

02

Build Your Foundation

Top implementations succeed because they match content to roles, let people practice immediately, and reinforce learning consistently. Consider:

- ◆ Content formats that work for your learners
- ◆ Quality benchmarks for each type of content
- ◆ Methods to measure learning effectiveness
- ◆ Technical requirements and limitations

With standards in place, the focus shifts to strategic deployment.

03

Deploy Strategically

Start small but think big. Launch pilots where you can:

- ◆ Measure impact clearly
- ◆ Demonstrate quick wins
- ◆ Build momentum through visible success
- ◆ Gather user feedback systematically.

As pilots launch, measuring real results becomes critical.

04

Track Results

Watch what matters:

- ◆ Time to competency
- ◆ Project completion rates
- ◆ Process efficiency

With clear evidence of impact, organizations can expand thoughtfully.

05

Grow Smart

When you expand:

- ◆ Share success stories
- ◆ Double down on what works
- ◆ Fix what doesn't
- ◆ Keep your eye on business results

Remember: successful implementation isn't about speed - it's about sustainability. Start small. Prove impact. Scale what works. The evidence shows this approach delivers.

Organizations that follow these guidelines see transformative results across every measure of learning effectiveness.

Key Takeaways

The verdict is clear: microlearning transforms how organizations develop talent. From retail to nuclear power, companies are seeing dramatic improvements when they align learning directly with work and let employees drive their own development. Here are the key takeaways:

Microlearning Gets Results

When companies cut training into focused, actionable pieces, people learn faster and retain more. The numbers prove it - from slashed development time to faster project completion, and training more relevant to each person's actual work.

Make It Fit the Workflow

Top companies embed microlearning directly into daily work. People access knowledge when they need it, practice immediately, and share insights as they go. Learning sticks because it's part of the job, not a break from it.

Trust Drives Transformation

When companies let people shape their own learning, individual performance soars. New hires reach full productivity faster. Employee engagement improves. Microlearning puts development in people's hands, letting them focus on what matters most for their work right now.

Let AI Make it Personal

AI doesn't just cut development costs - it makes microlearning more relevant to each person's actual work. Smart companies use technology to deliver the right content to the right person at the right moment.

Forward-thinking organizations understand that tools and platforms matter, but empowerment matters more. Successful organizations turn everyday work into learning opportunities, making it safe to experiment and learn from results. This builds more than skills -- it creates lasting capability. When organizations give their people both the freedom to drive their own development and the support to succeed, both sides win.

Sources

Brandon Hall Group™ HCM Outlook Study 2025

Brandon Hall Group™ Learning and Development Benchmarking Study

Brandon Hall Group™ Learning Revolution Study

Brandon Hall Group™ Exploring the Learner Experience Study

Brandon Hall Group™ Excellence Awards Case Study data

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About EBSCOlearning

As a trusted name in corporate learning, EBSCOlearning specializes in delivering high-quality resources that support L&D, training, and talent development, helping businesses achieve their goals through increased employee engagement and retention.

The platform equips employees with critical success skills such as leadership, communication, and decision-making ensuring they have the tools needed to succeed at every stage of their career.

EBSCOlearning's Accel solution leverages the power of microlearning to deliver quick, focused learning experiences that fit seamlessly into the workday. Employees gain valuable insights in just minutes and apply new skills immediately.



Learn more, visit www.ebscolearning.com

100k+

Corporate Learners

500+

Courses Offered

500+

Expert Instructors

70+

Years of Learning Excellence

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