



HCM OUTLOOK

*Navigating Through the Evolving
Global Workforce Dynamics*

2024



Clarity *from* Chaos

HCM's Role as Masters of Human Intelligence

Generative AI can't fully replace Human Intelligence (HI) in most scenarios. However, HI must embrace the power and potential of AI in improving work efficiency and effectiveness. In many ways, maybe most ways, human capital management (HCM) leaders must leverage their HI expertise to help companies fully realize the promise of AI.



HCM has spent generations mastering the understanding of the human workforce. HR knows how to find out what employees want and need. Learning and Development (L&D) knows the key to a healthy employee relationship is an opportunity to learn. Career plans, tools for balancing the demands of life, a culture that values and rewards contributions and embraces flexibility are all important components for a thriving and healthy workforce. Now is the time for HCM to step into the role of success enabler like never before.

By harnessing the collective HI of the organization and pointing it toward ongoing challenges and opportunities in the business, leveraging technology in the right way as they do it, HCM becomes the engineer of forward motion.

What we are laying out in this book are the practices, strategies and approaches that we believe will ensure maximum success for organizations. Based on over 31 years in the industry with a team of experts with decades of HR and learning experience. For example:

- 01 Learning agility will become the 'master skill' for all.** The accelerated evolution of work and the workplace will only intensify. As such, for all teammates, the ability to learn in first-time situations, to learn quickly and to adapt to VUCA conditions will be the skill that separates success from failure.
- 02 Wellness will become the "must-have" part of the employee value proposition.** Given a growing focus on topics such as mental health and financial well-being, the expectation that employers will take an active role in supporting employees will only increase. Essentially, employers who want to retain their top talent will need to show a clear commitment to their well-being.

- 03 AI will unlock high-potential talent and transform succession planning.** AI will enable more predictive and unbiased identification of high-potential talent in nearly every enterprise and across industries. By analyzing data, AI talent analytics will identify candidates with strong capability, aspiration and agility to take on bigger roles.
- 04 Leaders' 'super power' will be empowering talent and teams.** Command and control will give way to influence and empower. Top-level leaders won't necessarily be expected to make tough decisions; they will be expected to marshal all the forces needed to collaborate and leverage data to make the tough decisions. This is beginning to take shape at some level in the most progressive organizations and will continue to evolve as more command-and-control leaders crash and burn from mismanagement or personal scandal and companies led by those people lose value and competitive advantage.
- 05 Hybrid work flexibility becomes a critical DEI Issue.** Employees have chafed for generations over their inability to balance work and their personal lives. Employees' responsibilities to their families, friends and community can vary greatly for many reasons, including economic status, race, gender, age or religion. Employers will realize that flexibility in how, when or where people work is often not a convenience, but a requirement of circumstance and a critical component of an inclusive culture.
- 06 HR should become early adopters of AI technology.** HR can't take a wait-and-see approach to the evolution of work. Automating employment processes creates risk. As true masters of HI, HR needs to shape the direction of AI-driven workflows and contextualize those decisions within all aspects of the employment relationship, including employee experience, employee relations and compliance.
- 07 Recruiters will become talent brokers, something the best have always understood.** The role of recruiter has always been two parts salesperson and one part coach. However, in a capability desert, where there simply isn't the supply of talent to meet needs, relationships will become even more critical. The companies who win will be those where the talent brokers capitalize on years of relationship building and looking through unbiased eyes to find the best candidates from those already inside the organization.
- 08 The Metaverse will materialize.** Way back in 2022, the Metaverse was the next big thing. Then GenAI became the next big thing. But the Metaverse isn't dead. Many progressive companies are still developing it. In a world where online collaboration can become as static as answering emails eternally, the Metaverse enables people to enter immersive virtual worlds that allow them to interact with others using avatars that reflect their personas as they see themselves rather than how others perceive them.



There's no question of HCM becoming more data-driven. There's no question of HCM becoming more technology savvy. There's no question of the importance of HCM to the bottom-line performance of the business. And there's no question of HCM's mastery of HI in delivering these things for generations more to come.

The only question is whether you are ready to lead as the master of HI that your company needs you to be. It's easy to get lost in the noise of the day surrounding Generative AI, the future of work and the ever-widening skills gap. True HCM Excellence, though, brings order from chaos and clarity from confusion. HCM is in the best position to unite the workforce for a truly successful future.

Mike Cooke

CEO, Brandon Hall Group

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FUTURE OF WORK

01

CURRENT STATE

The future of work is a journey that never ends. Change is constant.

A new and emerging generation of workers — digital natives comfortable with ambiguity and looking for a very different relationship with work than previous generations — will play a lead role in the future of work.

AI — whether you embrace it or fear it — is already beginning to revolutionize the way humans work, whether in offices, factories, at home or elsewhere.

Key decision-making — once made at the top of organizations — is becoming more collaborative and inclusive as complexity increases. Strong leaders, with diverse ideas and experiences, are needed at all organizational levels.

Development of skills — perhaps new ones over and over again — will be critical. But given the unknowns that await us, perhaps the most important and enduring skills will not be the high-tech ones but the “human power skills” such as agility, resilience, empathy, curiosity, communication and collaboration. The rest will unfold as the future reveals itself, perhaps in ways we can’t now envision.



COMPLEXITIES

Employers struggle to hire great talent. They also struggle to onboard and develop great talent. They then struggle to keep great talent. Change in how organizations manage the relationship between their employees and work would be desperately needed, even if the future wasn't as formidable as it is.

Top Future of Work Initiatives*



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, HCM Outlook 2024

*Responses represent the percentage of respondents rating the listed initiatives as important or critical.

The unprecedented nature of this time in the history of work is merely an exclamation point on the need to change work paradigms, some of which — 9-to-5 work, a central workplace and top-down management — have been in place since before computers, which dominate our lives now, were invented.

The problem is, it's excruciatingly difficult for organizations to forge a future of work strategy.

Some of the struggles can be attributed to systemic dysfunction — the inability of leaders to work together across functions to meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders. For example, only 47% of enterprise HR professionals said they collaborate well with IT on leveraging digital workplace technologies to improve employee experience, according to the Brandon Hall Group study, *How to Collaborate on Employee Experience*.

But the difficulty is also understandable given the enormous number of conflicting priorities organizations face. For example:

On one hand...

Companies are encouraged to automate processes and leverage technology to improve efficiency.

Employees often want more flexibility in when and where they work.

Collecting more customer and employee data can help companies personalize services.

Remote work provides flexibility and broadens the talent pool.

Adopting sustainable practices around energy use, materials sourcing and waste reduction can increase costs.

Companies aim to reduce costs and maximize profits.

On the other hand...

There is also pressure to preserve jobs and limit layoffs. Adopting more automation can contradict the goal of maintaining employment levels.

Standardization in processes and systems can improve quality control and efficiency. Too much flexibility can make operations more complex.

Customers and employees are increasingly concerned about data privacy.

Some companies believe in-person collaboration and mentoring are critical, so remote-first policies can undermine cultural cohesion.

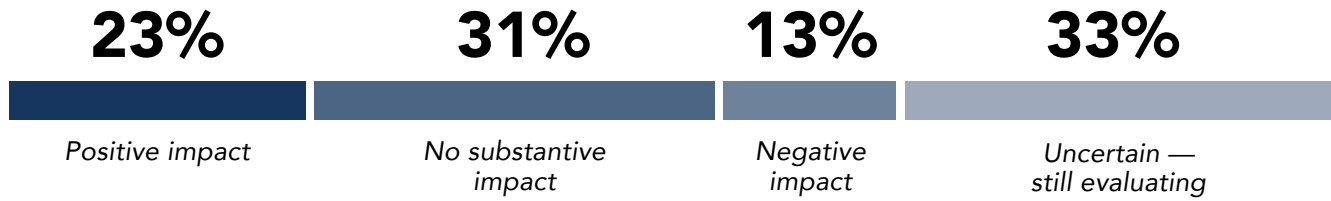
Sustainability is increasingly demanded by regulators, shareholders and consumers. The focus on profits can conflict with sustainability efforts.

There are also societal expectations to pay fair, livable wages. Measures to cut costs can conflict with pressure to increase compensation.

Source: Brandon Hall Group research

But the greatest pro/con debate surrounds the use of AI, and generative AI (GenAI) in particular. As tech companies and AI supporters advocate for putting their foot on the development accelerator, Brandon Hall Group research shows that HCM leaders are far more circumspect, with one-third of respondents saying they are still evaluating the potential impact.

HR’s View of the Impact of GenAI Will Have on Employee Experience

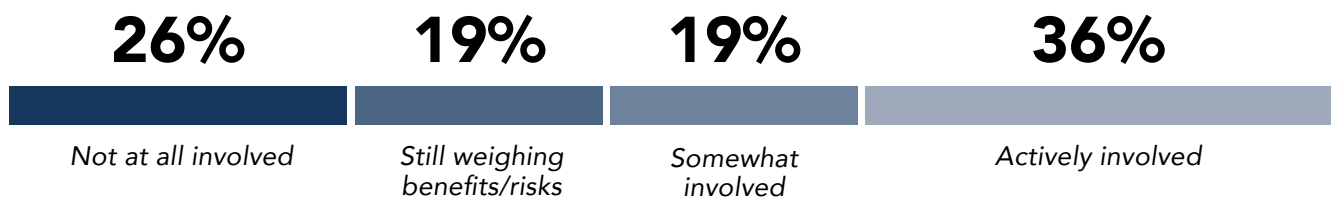


Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How HR Collaborates on Employee Experience

There is no question that AI carries with it risks that require careful consideration, including bias, cybersecurity risks and lack of transparency behind AI-driven decisions, which makes oversight difficult. These factors, and others, definitely require scrutiny. However, there is a difference between a careful and strategic approach toward the development of AI to drive an organization forward and creating barriers to progress.

The research also showed that almost half (45%) of HR organizations are not involved, or only somewhat involved, in shaping the organization’s generative AI strategy. For a function that has been seeking “a seat at the table” for decades, HR must be on the ground floor of shaping what is likely the most profound development of our lifetime.

Involvement of HR in Shaping the Organization’s GenAI Strategy



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, How HR Collaborates on Employee Experience



Whether AI continues its evolution at the present break-neck pace or slows somewhat as leaders seek to mitigate risks, there is no question that the future of work will be deeply affected by how we implement and regulate AI.

While the risks are real, so are the benefits for all aspects of HR and the workforce. Right now, according to Brandon Hall Group research, GenAI is most often used in Human Capital Management for enhancing and scaling training activities, accelerating training content development, assisting candidates in applying for jobs, and writing and updating job descriptions.

But AI has the very real potential to completely transform how humans work. This is not a movement that HR can afford to turn away from. All or most of the experiences that shape a workforce and an organization's culture — from hiring to onboarding, learning, career development, leadership, collaboration tools, benefits, pay access and equity, diversity and inclusion, and more — will be influenced by how organizations shape the potential around AI.

There are ethical and compliance arguments to be made, to be sure, on which HR should take a lead role. To do that, HR leaders and professionals must accept AI's inevitability and gain skills and knowledge around AI to be an informed and articulate arbiter. Anything less would be a malpractice.

HR's leadership is also critical because as work becomes more heavily powered by AI, the need for workers to have high-quality human skills becomes more critical. HR should model those skills and is responsible for helping the workforce value and develop those behaviors.

Prioritizing distinctly human talents ensures technology complements rather than replaces people. For example, AI lacks emotional intelligence but human empathy counters that to build trust and make meaningful connections between people. Technology alone can't facilitate nuanced interactions but strong communication skills by leaders and colleagues help share ideas, explain complex concepts, manage change and resolve conflicts smoothly.

To help shape the AI strategy and develop the human skills that complement it, HR leadership is vital in building a great workforce for the future.



CONSEQUENCES

HR has always been the advocate for the worker. If HR does not play a lead role in developing AI responsibly, organizations will not have a fully rounded view of how the workforce will be impacted — positively or negatively. The stakes could not be higher. Without becoming literate and articulate about all aspects of AI as it relates to the workforce:

- AI solutions could be developed without considerations for workforce impact and ethics.
- HR could be caught off guard by automation and unprepared to reskill and transition affected employees.
- HR cannot properly prepare managers or employees for changes.
- HR risks falling behind in their ability to recruit, develop and retain top talent.
- Biased systems could be deployed, risking legal issues or public backlash.
- HR will lack insights into current skill gaps that must be addressed to maximize the benefits of AI.
- HR will lack input into interfaces like chatbots or training systems to have an engaging and intuitive user experience.

HR must take a lead role in collaborating with the business on the evolution of AI to ensure responsible and strategic AI adoption across the business.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Here are five critical questions HR organizations must consider regarding their role in shaping the future of work.

1 How can we adopt a growth mindset around AI and other emerging technologies that will power the future of work?

2 How do we make employees as productive and engaged as possible in a fast-changing work environment?

3 In the volatile socioeconomic environment in which we work, how can we develop the skills our workforce needs to excel in the future?

4 How can we develop inclusive leaders with collaborative skills and business acumen to drive individual and organizational performance in an uncertain future?

5 How can we prepare a diverse and often-dispersed workforce to evolve and persevere in a disruptive environment while leading a fulfilling life outside of work?



BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

Here are five high-level strategies HR can use to help their organizations adapt to the future of work.

Take the Lead on Shaping Ethical and Inclusive AI

Whatever concerns HR leaders may legitimately have about the pros and cons of AI in shaping the future of work, nothing can be gained by sitting on the sidelines.

In too many organizations, HR has not embraced technology or data and analytics — the staples that have shaped business functions over the past 20 years. Don't repeat the same mistake with AI.

No one expects HR professionals to master machine learning algorithms or become experts in Python. But HR can develop the skillsets needed to ensure GenAI and other AI applications are accurate, reliable and legally sound.

HR can also become educated consumers by using GenAI platforms like ChatGPT, Claude 2, Bard and others to understand how they work, their tendencies and what safeguards might be needed.

HR should make their (educated) voices heard in working groups and governance teams that are making critical decisions on AI investments and uses. In fact, HR should lead the ongoing discussion of how humans and AI can thoughtfully co-exist.

HR can make itself invaluable by ensuring their organizations develop and abide by ethical AI principles that build trust across the organization and position them for future success.

Status of GenAI Skill Sets in HR

We do not have the right skill set and will need to develop it.

70%



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study:
How Generative AI Will Revolutionize HR



Give All Workers the Best Digital Tools You Can Afford

As the future of work evolves, understanding and optimizing the employee experience will be critical. Brandon Hall Group research shows HR is particularly focused on improving the employee experience for frontline and deskless workers, who have traditionally not received the same resources as other employee segments.

However, HR tends to take a somewhat limited view of employee experience.

HR's View on the Most Important Aspects of Employee Experience

Recognition and appreciation shown by peers for contributions and accomplishments **57%**

Opportunities for community involvement and giving back through corporate social responsibility programs and volunteer initiatives **49%**

Fair and competitive compensation and benefits package, which provides a sense of financial stability and security **44%**

Level of autonomy and decision-making authority given to employees. **43%**

Work-life balance is provided through flexible work arrangements, generous time-off policies, and family-friendly benefits **41%**

In a hyper-connected digital world, there must be more focus on arming employees with the digital tools they need to be as efficient as possible. Only 35% of organizations in our research ranked the use of innovative technology and tools to support employee productivity and efficiency as a critical part of employee experience. This ranked ninth of 14 elements surveyed.

As the work experience continues to quickly evolve, we believe HR teams need to prioritize their relationship with IT in finding the right digital tools to arm the workforce for success. The key is choosing secure, user-friendly tools that integrate well and enable seamless collaboration and communication for a distributed, modern workforce. Training and support are crucial for adoption.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study: Culture Eats Strategy: Is Your Employee Experience What You Intended?

*Percentages reflect organizations ranking employee experience elements at 5 on a 5-point scale.

Here is a range of tools that HR and IT must choose from and match to the needs of employees and the organization:

- **Time-tracking software** to monitor time on tasks and projects.
- **Remote desktop tools** to control computers from afar.
- **Visual collaboration whiteboards** for brainstorming sessions.
- **Wearables** like smart glasses that can scan barcodes, pull up instructions and record interactions.
- **Smartphones or tablets with apps** for managing tasks, recording inventory, product lookups, shifts and more.
- **Digital training tools** like virtual and augmented reality to train employees with hands-on simulations, especially for immersive safety and equipment operation simulations.
- **Location tracking devices** to monitor assets, inventory and people to streamline operations.
- **Artificial intelligence chatbots** to provide real-time support or product information.
- **Robotic process automation** to automate repetitive, high-volume tasks.
- **Digital signage and smart displays** to share dynamic information and safety alerts.
- **Voice assistants** to provide hands-free help with tasks.

Focus on Building 'Human Power Skills'

The more technology takes over business functions, the more important it is to elevate human skills that machines cannot replicate.

With all the focus on upskilling and reskilling employees, the importance of so-called "human power skills" should not be underestimated. HR and Learning teams must make sure employees can tap into their most innate capabilities — imagination, empathy, creativity, relationship-building and cross-domain thinking, to name a few. Those give humans an edge in adapting to the future of work. Here are some of the skills we see as having increased value as AI becomes more capable:

- **Creativity.** We will always have an edge over AI in unleashing our imagination to think of novel ideas and make connections between disparate concepts to generate innovative solutions.
- **Social intelligence.** AI struggles to replicate human emotional capabilities. Understanding social cues, building relationships and influencing others through emotional intelligence is a strength that should be developed.

- **Cross-cultural competency.** AI has no inherent culture, so leveraging an understanding of cultural contexts, differences and sensitivities to relate better to diverse groups is critical in building an inclusive workforce that can adapt to ongoing change.
- **Critical thinking.** Humans are better at synthesizing complex qualitative information, though this skill is not always as fully developed as it could be. We need to help employees become more skillful in evaluating arguments, questioning assumptions and making reasoned judgments.
- **Leadership.** AI cannot lead because it lacks human passion and persuasiveness. Inspiring action, aligning teams and driving change through vision and influence will depend on developing better leadership skills. This requires continuous learning journeys — not one-off courses.
- **Adaptability.** We have the capacity for greater contextual agility, which needs to be developed so we can better adjust quickly to new situations, processes and requirements.
- **Ethics.** Acting with integrity and making morally sound decisions is perhaps the biggest difference between humans and machines and will be critical in ensuring AI realizes its positive potential.

Transform Leadership

The way we develop leaders has not worked for decades. It certainly won't succeed as the workforce continues to evolve. If employers are ever going to truly transform leadership, now is the time.

Top-down, command-and-control leadership won't work. The future-ready leader must be agile, innovative, data-driven, digitally savvy, able to lead change, rally teams around customer needs, distribute authority, develop talent and communicate vision.

That's not an easy proposition.

Brandon Hall Group research shows that the majority of employers are now embracing that leaders must be developed at all levels of the organization, which is a big step forward.

But there still is an over-reliance on classroom learning events. Development must be a continuous journey that includes consistent reinforcement of concepts and ongoing opportunities to work with peers to apply skills in real business situations in a risk-free environment.

This involves technologies such as cohort-based learning and simulations and a requirement for leaders to show they can apply their skills at specific proficiency levels before they are promoted into new roles. That requires an investment that many organizations have not been willing to make. That must change if employers expect to develop the leaders they need to excel in the future of work.

Personalize the Employee Experience

For companies to excel in the modern socioeconomic and geopolitical reality, they must build a culture centered on flexibility, respect, inclusion and listening, where people — whether they are executives, managers, frontline employees or gig workers — feel valued for their differences and empowered to make work fit their lives.

This personalization of the employee experience will take time and organization-wide collaboration and investment. But it must be a prominent focus for employers that want to be successful in the future.

There is a lot to this — too much to fully capture in an essay like this. And every organization is different, so there is no one recipe for success. But here are some examples of how employers can personalize and contextualize the employee experience for a diverse and dispersed workforce:



- **Offer flexibility** in when and where people work to accommodate different needs and preferences. Provide options like remote work, flexible schedules and job sharing.
- **Build continuous learning journeys** by creating individual development plans through more regular check-ins between managers and employees to understand their goals and customize growth opportunities.
- **Leverage data and analytics** to gain insights into individual working styles and preferences to tailor approaches to engagement, recognition and incentive programs.
- **Foster a culture of inclusion** through education, celebrating diversity, building belonging through employee resource groups and having zero tolerance for discrimination.
- **Offer benefits that provide choice and meet diverse needs**, including extended healthcare coverage, individualized leave and vacation schedules, retirement planning, student loan repayment and mental health services — to name just a few.
- **Enable employees to showcase their unique backgrounds**, experiences and cultures through ERGs, storytelling, mentorship and more.
- **Train leaders on bias mitigation**, cross-cultural understanding and creating psychologically safe spaces for open sharing of perspectives.
- **Maintain strong channels for two-way communication** between leadership and employees to understand diverse viewpoints and experiences.

PREDICTIONS

SHORT-TERM

Apprenticeships Make a Comeback — In Digital Form

As new job roles are invented and existing job roles require new skills, it will be more important than ever before to properly prepare employees for new roles. The prevailing habit now to identify people based on performance and — to a lesser degree, potential — and provide on-the-job training when they move into the role, is flawed. Digital apprenticeships — a combination of structured practical learning, mentorship and applied skills — offered before people move into new roles — are a highly strategic way to build a motivated, qualified workforce.

The Gig Economy Transforms the Talent Ecosystem

The gig economy will provide talented workers and organizations with greater flexibility than ever before. The availability of various gigs will provide talented individuals the opportunity to pursue their passions, meet important people, and develop their skills and talents. The gig economy will also provide talented workers with greater flexibility. Companies will be able to quickly access talent without the administrative burden of hiring someone full-time. Companies will save on costs associated with managing independent workers since there is no need to provide benefits or workplace amenities. The gig economy will not only leverage the talents of those involved, but also create a more efficient and effective model of conducting business.

Personalized Benefits Will Define Employer Brand

Workplaces will operate around employees and their preferences and personalize experiences for individuals and their collective communities. 21st Century consumerism has personalized everything for the everyday buyer using technology. Those consumer-driven technologies will do the same for the everyday worker.

Leaders' 'Superpower' Will be Empowering Talent and Teams

Command-and-control will give way to influence-and-empower. Top-level leaders won't be expected to make tough decisions; they will be expected to marshal all the forces needed to collaborate and leverage data to make the tough decisions. They will be expected to communicate mission, values, principles and strategies and listen to the diverse team of experts they will have developed. This is beginning to take shape at some level in the most progressive organizations and will continue to evolve.

LONGER-TERM

Leaders will Traverse the Human and Digital Worlds

Increased automation relieves managers of the most burdensome administrative tasks, empowering them to improve the power of teams. They will need to have great relationships, not just with humans, but with the expansive set of technology tools — including robots — that facilitate work and business. Managers will traverse the digital and human worlds to drive individual, team and organizational performance.

Work Will Know No Boundaries

We will see a complete transformation in the way people view their careers and the way they approach their working lives. With no boundaries, work will become intertwined with the rhythms of life, allowing for a much more holistic approach and a new type of work-life balance.

We Will Be Able to Speak to Anyone About Anything

Anything or anyone you can speak to will understand you and speak back. It will be possible to speak to any person or any computer in any language in real-time. People from different countries will more efficiently communicate and collaborate on business projects. These tools will be able to analyze and understand the source language and generate a translation in the target language.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Becomes BYOA (Bring Your Own Augmentation)

Employees bring technology hosted on their bodies that gives them cognitive abilities humans would otherwise lack. This includes wearable devices that provide sensory enhancement, such as enhanced vision or hearing, or access to portable AI and large language models, which makes information available to a user's eyes and ears "on demand."

The Metaverse Will Materialize

Way back in 2022, the Metaverse was the next big thing. Then GenAI became the next big thing. But the Metaverse is not dead. Many progressive companies are still developing it.

The Metaverse does have a place in the future of work. In a world where online collaboration can become as static as answering emails eternally, the Metaverse enables people to enter immersive virtual worlds that allow us to interact with others using avatars that reflect our personas as we see ourselves, rather than how others perceive us. The Metaverse enables virtual communities that are separate from the chaotic and often dysfunctional ones we actually work in, enabling better social interaction and collaboration.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Kate Conley, PhD

Lead People Analytics Consultant - Employee Listening, UKG

“As with all new technologies, we must make an intentional choice to leverage AI to harness and expand our human energy rather than allowing it to distract and add to the demands on our attention. By consciously using it to conserve energy, we can then put it toward efforts that set us apart from machines - human connection, growing in our potential, finding purpose. This is where unique value is created for employees, customers, and society.”



Jaime Goff, PhD

Director of Leadership Development, CHRISTUS Health

“For leadership development specifically, shifting from a focus on the “what” of leadership to the “who” of the leader – Leaders need to be mentally, emotionally, and cognitively healthy and astute to meet new expectations of leaders. Leadership is no longer primarily about managing others’ work, driving results, casting strategic vision, etc. Those things are still expected, but leaders are also now expected to attend to their employees’ wellbeing, sense of belonging, psychological safety, and growth. There are no skills to help leaders do this; they must be healthy, whole, integrated, and emotionally aware themselves in order to create this type of environment/culture for their teams.”



Gabriel Schaepman

Vice President, Human Resources, Swiss Re Group

“Imagine a future where training is less of a chore and more of an adventure. AI-powered algorithms will curate personalized learning paths, tailoring content and pacing to each employee’s unique needs and preferences.

“It’s not just the future; it’s the present. As AI technology continues to develop, the possibilities for L&D are limitless. For example, forget the days of tedious SME meetings and endless revisions. With AI, you can whip up a top-notch eLearning course in a flash. We did it – and created a full draft of a new tailored eLearning including a final test with 8 questions - in just 2.5 minutes. Now that’s transformation.”

BRANDON HALL GROUP

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Enhance your career with one of our six certifications that focuses on the learning journey where the exam taker feels they have acquired new competencies and skills that can be applied in their organization. Each of our six certifications are taken in 3 phases; competency development, scenario/case study evaluation, build a program for your organization.

Advantages of our programs:



Always Available

Access your courses anytime, anywhere, with a computer, tablet or smartphone



Show Your Milestone

Add credentials to the back of your name on your email and professional networks



Your Pace, Your Time

Self-paced online program. One year to complete



The More, the Better

Enroll a group into our cohort model to upskill as a team



Award Winning Formula

Leveraging our HCM Excellence Awards we teach you how to create programs that measurably benefit the organization



Learning Journey

Videos, quizzes and interactive content designed for a proven learning experience

Earn your designation as a Brandon Hall Group Certified Strategist in one of our programs:

- Certified Learning Strategist (CLS)
- Certified Leadership Development Strategist (CLDS)
- Certified Talent Management Strategist (CTMS)
- Certified Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Leader (CDEIL)
- Certified Human Resources Strategist (CHRS)
- Certified Talent Acquisition Strategist (CTAS)

We have created a comprehensive Resource Guide with thought-leading research insights, use cases and executive interviews covering 24 competencies (specific to your field) every professional should possess. You should plan on committing approximately 40 hours to complete the certification and you have 1 year to complete. This includes reading through the resource guide and exam time.



”

"I found the case studies really interesting. It can be easy to be trapped in the bubble of our own context. Stepping outside my current day to day and stepping into another company/industry/challenge was both broadening and provocative."

Micah Jacobson, Sr. Director, Global Enablement Innovation Strategy at Salesforce

”

"I found this course to be very relatable to my current work profile at Colgate Palmolive. The topics covered provide a good amount of knowledge each professional should possess. The assessments allow us to think from various perspectives and are well laid out for learning retention. I thoroughly enjoyed every bit of this program"

Rakhi Dadoo, Global Learning Design Manager at Colgate Palmolive

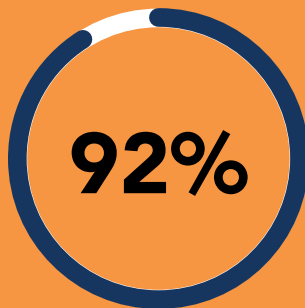
TALENT MANAGEMENT

Unleashing the Power of
Employee Experience for Talent Retention

02

CURRENT STATE

Given the ongoing and seemingly never-ending disruption that organizations face, talent retention remains a daunting challenge for most employers.



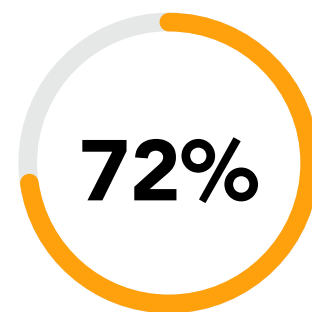
Organizations Facing High/Very High Risk of Top Talent Leaving in the Next Year

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Retaining Talent



Having the right talent with the right skills in the right place at the right time is the key to responding to changes in the business. Yet companies still struggle to mobilize rapidly and respond with agility. This gap is only worsening as the fundamental nature of work continues to shift while organizations struggle to keep up with digital skills. This challenge is universal and industry-agnostic.

Companies are focusing heavily on the employee experience (EX) as a way to differentiate themselves and attract top talent in what remains a highly competitive market.



Organizations Ranking EX as Important/Critical Future of Work Initiative

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Retaining Talent

Retaining key talent requires breaking down existing barriers and paradigms. Effective organizations are reevaluating outdated policies, fostering a culture of continuous learning and development, and providing employees with opportunities for growth and advancement.

Today's Talent Management strategies are evolving to better align with, and enable, business strategy execution. With competitiveness intensifying, inclusive and outcomes-driven talent practices are imperative.

- Learning and Development teams continue to prioritize participation rather than performance. Only when business results are the primary measure of training success will Learning teams fulfill their potential as true business partners.
- Talent Acquisition is starting to prioritize long-term quality of hire. A major contributing factor to retention is identifying and hiring the best candidate. Assessments used to measure skills are underutilized and can contribute to making the hiring decision a valid, higher-quality decision.
- Performance Management is hyper-focused on metrics and administrative tasks. If truly future-oriented performance conversations were taking place, employees would envision a future path for career growth, thereby enhancing career development efforts.
- Workforce Planning has tremendous untapped potential for using predictive analytics to pinpoint flight risks, patterns in turnover, etc.

Overall, Talent Management must evolve into a holistic, mission-critical business function. As technology disruption accelerates, forward-looking organizations must evolve Talent Management to be more outcomes-driven and digitally powered to build strategic capabilities and competitive advantage.



COMPLEXITIES

Talent Management practices are highly intertwined. To implement effective practices in one area, such as EX, other practices such as well-being must also be effective. Turnover not only indicates concerns about retention but also fuels the overall stress and strain of the work team left with fewer members and negatively impacts well-being and EX.

Barriers to career development are clear and plentiful. Skills-based career paths have yet to be developed, which leads to employees believing there is no path for them. Resource constraints contribute to the notion that career development opportunities are invisible to the workforce. Few organizations use assessments to understand skills and potential for growth.

Several complexities have emerged through our research, including the inability of HR and Operations to work together to manage talent. Employees crave growth and advancement but are often caught in a battle between HR and their functional unit.

Another factor complicating the situation is the difficulty in defining new skills and capabilities that will be needed by the business in the future. Companies meeting this challenge head-on will be positioned to ask the right questions, truly listen to the responses using techniques other than just surveys and respond accordingly.

As far as determining what skills are needed in the future, all indicators point to problem-solving and tech-savviness, but more importantly, power skills such as conflict management, collaboration and communication skills.

Challenges to Retention

59%

Ability of business leaders and HR to work effectively together to manage talent

57%

Difficulty defining new skills or capabilities needed by the business in the future

40%

Business leaders' reluctance to share talent across the organization

34%

Inufficient budget for managing and developing talent

23%

Salary expectations of top talent

18%

Possible or pending staff reductions

18%

Economic pressure on the business

Source: 2023 Brandon Hall Group Study, Retaining Talent

Skills Priorities

Skills Most Required for New Job Roles

Cloud computing	36%
Artificial Intelligence	31%
Data Science/Analytics	27%
Algorithm Design	27%
Coding and Software Enhancement	26%

Skills Most Added to Existing Job Roles

Collaboration/Inclusion	46%
Critical Thinking/Design Thinking	46%
Creative Problem-Solving	32%
Empathy	28%

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Hiring for New Skills and New Roles

When top leadership makes talent management a strategic priority, it can spark a positive cycle. As efforts to identify career paths improve, and ongoing and constructive performance and development conversations happen with employees across the workforce, other aspects of EX are sure to fall into place.

The process of reimagining the performance review process to better assess employee potential and personal goals is time well spent. With that in place, there will be space for creating greater accountability for leadership's role in developing people.

EX must be looked at holistically — because it is an outcome of myriad factors. Leaders across the organization must work together to understand things like the digital work experience and partnering with IT to create better digital solutions, particularly for the deskless workers at the frontline.

This, in turn, benefits all employees. When the work experience is improved, talent retention follows.

As Talent Management is increasingly expected to directly enable business strategy execution, a metrics-driven, outcomes-focused approach is critical. Companies that are more data-driven and technology-savvy will certainly gain a deeper understanding of what their employees want and need. Every tool and technology available can be used to understand the multifaceted topic of talent management.

At the same time, balance is called for. Talent practices based solely on return on investment run the risk of dehumanizing the workforce.

CONSEQUENCES

Organizations that continue to struggle with aligning Talent Management and business objectives will find that their retention issues continue to grow. Employees can withstand periods of disruption; however, ongoing challenges should be re-examined. Imposing any level of balance amid our ongoing VUCA world of work is critical. If some semblance of balance is not reached, the destructive rate of churn generated by employees and leaders going from position to position will continue to be a barrier to overall organizational success.

When employee turnover at any level remains high, skill gaps continue to grow. Companies that do not understand the skills needed for the success of their business and their current organizational gaps cannot create strategies to address those gaps. Failure to address them over time will result in lower performance. This sets off a downward spiral of low performance impacting employee engagement, which impacts retention and so on. The Brandon Hall Group HCM Outlook 2024 Study indicates companies are figuring this out.



Top Talent Management Areas for Investment, 2024

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, HCM Outlook 2024

Planned investments in Talent Management are all squarely targeted at work that requires a strong understanding of skills needs. From that understanding, companies will need strategies to build those skills in the current workforce and find them from the external market. The savviest companies will make sure those efforts work together seamlessly.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

How do we improve talent retention for a hybrid workforce?

How can we ensure the talent management function has the technology skills they need to thrive?

How can we better prepare employees to help the business and build their careers at the same time?

How can we evolve into a more data-driven talent management organization?

What actions should we take to develop and foster psychological safety and well-being?



BRANDON HALL GROUP **POV**

Listen Up and Learn

Organizations often tend to want to collect new data to identify skill gaps and other issues that hamper engagement when they already have the data that delivers the insights they want. There are two ways to get feedback from employees: ask them a question or ask the data a question. If you choose the second option and have the right data-mining tools, which are typically powered by AI or machine learning or even general analytics, you will get much more mileage from the data you have and in much less time. By understanding employee needs, embracing flexibility and challenging traditional norms, organizations can create a compelling value proposition that attracts and retains the best talent in the industry.

Become a TM Technologist

Every area that touches talent has a prime opportunity to leverage technology. Talent management practitioners must monitor industry trends and advancements to identify the skills that will be crucial for the Talent Management function. They must stay ahead of the game to adapt to changing technological landscapes. Collaboration between HR and IT departments is a must. These departments must devise initiatives in tandem and ensure they align with the overall organization's goals and objectives. These actions will help ensure the Talent Management function has the technology skills needed in a rapidly evolving business landscape.

Drive Development, Both Skills and Career

Creating a win-win experience fuels a positive EX and employer brand. When both performance levels and career potential increase, productivity will most certainly follow.

Integrating performance with future growth can be powerful. Providing the vision of this combination will engage and drive both employees and leaders alike. Encouraging ongoing feedback along with personalized interaction is the formula to follow. Ensure that feedback is collected from multiple sources that are positioned to provide relevant and meaningful information. Review both performance and development progress on a routine basis to ensure consistency.

A vital first step is aligning skills development with the strategic goals of the company. Employees should acquire skills that are relevant to the organization's current and future needs.

Successful companies recognize the need for continuous learning and development and emphasize the importance of creating a culture of learning. In this type of culture, employees are encouraged to acquire new skills and knowledge throughout their careers.

Employees who focus on skill development and growth are more likely to stay engaged in their work and with their organization. Skill development, including reskilling and upskilling, not only enhances their performance but also increases their job satisfaction and commitment to the organization.

Skills development is also crucial for fostering adaptability and driving innovation within the organization. Employees with diverse skill sets are better equipped to navigate change, embrace new technologies and contribute to the company's overall success.



Manage Metrics, Lead People

Having objective data available on a regular basis can be a game-changer. Examining data often provides a sense of real-time knowing so that we can see the needle move — a meaningful reward for the hard work and effort that it took to make it happen.

While metrics matter, companies must balance quantitative ROI with qualitative outcomes to evolve their talent practices. Coaching, mentoring and continuous learning opportunities humanize talent development. By integrating data with empathy, leaders can enable strategy while acknowledging and respecting employees' aspirations. Leaders should be simplifying and diversifying at the same time. Going back to the basics of carving ways out of the chaos — solving any challenge, no matter how great or small — generates a measurable outcome while at the same time creating a path to clarity that is visible to others.

Build a Culture of Flexibility and Open Sharing of Ideas, Opinions

Empowering employees to speak up, ask questions and make suggestions without concern for criticism or negative consequences fosters a culture of safety. Offering flexible work arrangements so employees can balance work and personal lives, as well as generous time off, encourages employee well-being.

Be flexible wherever and whenever possible. Providing employees with greater flexibility in how, when and where they work is a key aspect of a compelling EX. Embracing remote work options, flexible schedules and alternative work arrangements are sure to enhance employee satisfaction, engagement, performance and retention. It is incumbent upon leaders to role model the openness, integrity, work-life balance and caring for others that will establish this type of culture.

As leaders, do everything possible to deepen your understanding of employee needs. Despite having a general sense of the EX, employers often lack a comprehensive understanding of their employees' needs that includes differences by job function and level, geography, demographics and work environment (remote or hybrid vs. on-site; desk workers vs. frontline/deskless workers). Identifying and addressing these gaps is crucial for developing an EX that truly engages and retains talent. Multitudes of technologies now exist so we can gather meaningful information from archival data and never need to deploy a survey. Gathering information, which in aggregate form emerges as themes and trends, provides action items for leadership to take on.

PREDICTIONS

The Remote Work Revolution: Trust or Bust

A fundamental and formidable shift in attitude about remote work will continue to manifest. Because technology continues to advance and allows remote work to be effective for many types of jobs, the tension triggered by management distrust of employee productivity will reach a breaking point. If retention and engagement truly are the most critical targets, organizations must trust employees wherever they work and assess results rather than obsess over when and where work occurs.

The Rise of AI-Powered Listening

In the era of AI, organizations will recognize the importance of shaping the employee experience. Leaders in Human Resources will begin to embrace AI technology and partner with IT to gain a better understanding of what employees truly want. To paint a clear and accurate picture of the expected employee experience, organizations will turn to organizational data and AI. The traditional method of annual engagement surveys is no longer sufficient. Organizations will develop more organic and ongoing listening strategies to gather valuable data.

Why Wellness? Don't Get Left in Its Wake

Wellness will become the “must-have” part of the employee value proposition. Given a growing focus on topics such as mental health and financial well-being, the expectation that employers will take an active role in supporting employees will only increase. For those organizations that truly endorse inclusion, sustainability and purpose, well-being efforts show a true commitment to those principles. Essentially, employers who want to retain their top talent will need to show a clear commitment to their employees' well-being.

New Markers of Growth and Development Will Emerge

Rather than depending on institutions of higher education, which can take months or years for someone's degree completion, certifications and badges earned through professional associations and institutes will become the new normal. With laser-focused learning, streamlined objectives and a clear, practical focus, employees can experience relevant and significant development at a fraction of the cost and in a fraction of the time. Micro-credentials earned on specific topics provide an objective estimate of skills built and knowledge gained. Expanding those micro-credentials to reflect work experience is another powerful way to understand everything the workforce brings to the table.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Debora Jeske

Senior Learning and Development Specialist, Emnify

“We’ve moved away a little bit from competency frameworks and more to skill-based hiring and skill-based development, so we provide development for all people in our company. Part of the reason is because in order for career progression to be more accessible at all levels, we need to have details about what kinds of skills are needed and how leaders demonstrate those skills a certain levels. Having that for every single level provides transparency and people within the organization begin to understand more. We want to answer the question, What kind of additional skills would I need to learn or demonstrate in the day-to-day to actually move up?”



El pagnier Kay “EK” Hudson

**Senior Vice President, Human Resources,
Florida International University**

“Health and wellness are taking a main role in our talent management approach. It’s no longer optional or nice to have. We are living this now. Now, we are making health and wellness part of the framework. We continue to move to a more diverse workforce. We need to focus on building succession because Gen Z workforce members are more restless and not giving an employer more than two to three years of their careers. We need to recreate and rebuild the talent and business model.”



Ron Clare

Director of Human Resources, City of Deerfield Beach, Florida

“To lead and guide talent management, I need to know what the mission is and what the views are in the areas I’m dealing with. I have regular meetings with directors to find out what their hot spots are and how my HR team can serve them better. I help redirect them if they’re off and they help direct us if we’re off. Each department may have a different path to get to their end goal. I put forth the message to shape and re-shape perspectives about where our talent practices need to go.”



THE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Excellence Awards feature two annual programs that recognize the best organizations that have successfully deployed programs, strategies, modalities, processes, systems, and tools that have achieved measurable results. The awards attract entrants from leading corporations around the world, as well as mid-market and smaller firms.

Human Capital Management

Spring Program

Opens: 01.02.2024
Deadline: 04.12.2024

[Learn more](#)



Technology

Fall Program

Opens: 04.22.2024
Deadline: 09.12.2024

[Learn more](#)





Human Capital Management
EXCELLENCE
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The Employee Voice Award is a new addition to our prestigious lineup. This award shines a spotlight on organizations that prioritize the voices of their employees

Award Categories

- Engagement
- Promotion and Succession
- Career Development
- Employer Brand
- Culture
- Technology Environment
- Leadership
- DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)
- CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)
- Talent Mobility
- Attracting Top Talent
- Change Ready
- Hybrid Work
- Wellness
- Rewards and Recognition
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Innovation and Creativity

CEO's Perspective

“In successful organizations, the voice of every employee is a valuable asset. Listening to your workforce is not just a practice; it's a strategic imperative. At Brandon Hall Group, we believe that organizations reaching the pinnacle of success prioritize the voices of their employees. The Employee Voice Edition of the HCM Excellence Awards is our way of celebrating those who understand the power of employee insights.”

Mike Cooke

CEO, Brandon Hall Group

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Revitalizing Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion as a Critical Business Strategy

03

CURRENT STATE

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is at a critical inflection point.

While many organizations made high-profile commitments to advance DEI in the wake of social justice issues that arose in the late 2010s and 2020, the measurable business impact has been underwhelming.

What Has Changed from Your Organization's Approach to DEI Since 2020

49% Diversity of new hires has improved.

31% Employee Resource Group participation has grown.

49% Employees are more comfortable discussing their background and cultural experiences.

27% Managers/leaders understand the principles of DEI and consistently demonstrate commitment to them.

46% DEI values are effectively communicated across the enterprise.

26% Metrics for understanding progress in DEI have been established and utilized.

45% Individuals treat different ideas and opinions with respect.

25% The diversity of the leadership team is more reflective of the composition of the workforce.

38% Diversity of the talent pipeline has improved.

19% Pay and benefit equity has improved.

36% Specific short-term and long-term diversity goals are developed and communicated.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Building a Culture that Embraces Diversity and Fosters Inclusion

The focus on DEI has faced headwinds over the past year from a sociopolitical backlash that characterizes DEI efforts as discriminatory or irrelevant to business goals. While most corporations maintain a rhetorical commitment to DEI, the polarization around these issues has created uncertainty and hesitancy among leaders in many organizations while structural and systemic barriers to equity remain entrenched.

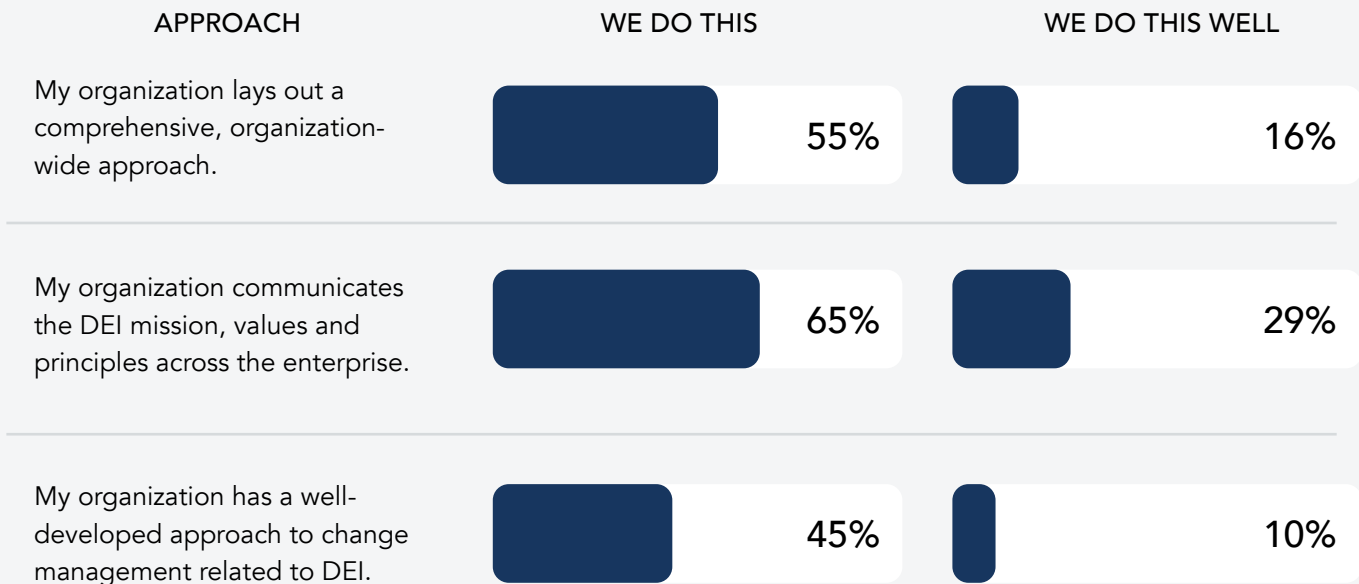
The strain of the backlash was demonstrated dramatically in mid-2023 when the CEO of a company whose brand is focused heavily on DEI told a private gathering that he was no longer comfortable talking about these issues in public. Many DEI leaders and advocates are taking stock of their efforts and trying to understand how to fight through the headwinds and make substantive progress. Key obstacles include:

- **Lack of accountability.** Diversity goals are often not tied to business objectives or leadership performance reviews.
- **Narrow recruitment approaches.** Relying on closed talent networks perpetuates homogeneous workforces. Expanding recruiting to new pools is needed.
- **Biased talent management processes.** Performance reviews, promotion criteria and assessments of leadership potential are often disadvantageous to minorities.
- **Exclusive cultural norms.** Alienating corporate cultures and lack of belonging drive turnover among underrepresented groups.
- **Lack of diversity in leadership.** The absence of diverse role models and mentors at senior levels hampers retention and advancement of people from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Many companies have not helped themselves by focusing predominantly on awareness and training rather than building an organization-wide strategy and embedding the principles of DEI across the enterprise.



Strategic Approach to DEI



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Improving the Business Impact of DE&I: Creating a Culture for Success

Organizations excelling at DEI focus on it as a business imperative that addresses several critical issues, including:

- A tight talent market.** With fierce competition for skills, organizations need diverse talent pipelines. Those seen as non-inclusive will struggle to attract top talent.
- Consumer expectations.** Customers/clients increasingly factor DEI performance into purchasing decisions. They demand ethical conduct and social responsibility.
- Investor pressure.** Shareholders and asset managers are asking tough questions about organizational diversity and calling for more diverse leadership.

COMPLEXITIES

While data about the business value of DEI is abundant, many business leaders do not take the right steps to communicate and demonstrate to stakeholders how DEI can help them be more innovative and competitive — now and in the future.

In some organizations, DEI is still treated as a compliance issue, while in others it is portrayed more as a moral imperative, which can turn off financially driven leaders and those with different social and political beliefs. Few employers — less than one-third, according to Brandon Hall Group research — use specific diversity and inclusion metrics to track business impact over time. It's impossible to make a business case without data.

Proficiency in Measuring DEI

"We leverage technology to capture sentiment, feedback about DEI in the organization."

15% say they do this well.



"We set goals for and measure how DEI positively impacts employee experience."

25% say they do this well.



"We set goals for and measure how DEI positively impacts customer experience."

16% say they do this well.



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Improving the Business Impact of DEI: Creating a Culture for Success

To be successful, organizations must elevate DEI as a business priority and make the case that:

- Diverse teams drive innovation, reflecting a multiplicity of perspectives. This leads to better solutions.
- Inclusive cultures unlock the full potential of all talent. Employees feel a sense of belonging, engagement and empowerment, and feel better able to contribute ideas.
- Access to the widest talent pools gives a competitive edge in recruiting top talent in a tight market.
- Mirroring customer/community demographics enhances market insights and brand relevance.
- Proven commitment to DEI helps attract and retain top talent across demographics.
- Greater diversity at senior levels and in the boardroom signals future-readiness.



At PSCU, the largest credit union service organization in the U.S., embedding DEI across the organization is a core value. “We are now embedding the values of DEI into our candidate interview guide to make sure we are hiring the right people,” said Laura Sehres, VP of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

“We are also changing our performance appraisals. We assess people behaviors aligning with our core organizational values,” she said. “DEI is included in our actual performance appraisal now to assess whether the person is living and demonstrating the organizational values, whether they foster inclusion or — if they are a hiring manager, whether they have a diverse team.”



Even when DEI is embedded as a business strategy, the journey to a more diverse and inclusive workforce and organization is often a function of cultural change and cannot be accomplished overnight. LexisNexis, a provider of information and analytics for legal, corporate, government and nonprofit organizations, has won multiple Brandon Hall Group HCM Excellence Awards® for their DEI efforts. The company took a strategic and pragmatic approach that unfolded over four years and will continue to evolve across the decade:

Our I&D Journey



LexisNexis®

Communicating strategic direction and building foundations

2020-2021

Embedding change and advancing our culture of inclusion and diversity

2021-2022

Realizing a competitive advantage through our culture of inclusion and diversity

2023 and Beyond

Achieving, sustaining and enhancing business performance

2022-2023



The issues around DEI are deep and often personal. Difficult conversations are often necessary to help people understand issues like unconscious bias and understand the advantages of facing our biases and communicating and leading inclusively. But at the same time, DEI leaders must bring it all back to the needs of the organization.

“When workforce demographics will change so drastically in the next 20 years, if you don’t know how to lead people who are different from you, then you will struggle to be successful,” said Lacey Jacobs, CEO and Founder of the H.I.P. Network and an experienced DEI leader, consultant and coach. “The world is not going to continue to revolve around the same dominant group.”

Jacobs said that progress can be a struggle but that she does see evolution. “I just facilitated a conversation with a group of leaders — mostly white men. We had a wonderful conversation about some examples of how the old ways of leading involved people being shut down and not inviting diverse opinions. In the past, I would hear some of that old-school style being defended — ‘we have to get things done, we don’t have time for this stuff’ — but I am seeing a shift. People are realizing that this is not the way to do leadership. If you do it that way, you are going to have a disengaged workforce. So, I am seeing more open-mindedness about skills like empathy, vulnerability and humility.”



CONSEQUENCES

Without aligning DEI with business goals and embedding it in the operations of the enterprise, DEI will not realize its full potential. This can have significant consequences, including:

- **Innovation and growth suffer.** Lack of diversity leads to groupthink, less innovation and poor decision-making.
- **Critical talent shortages expand.** Skills gaps emerge in a tight labor market as diverse talent leaves or avoids non-inclusive employers.
- **Reputational risks increase.** Current and prospective employees, customers and investors increasingly demand social responsibility.
- **Legal risks arise.** Employment lawsuits over discrimination and harassment are costly.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

To shape a more diverse, equitable and inclusive future, organizations must address many difficult questions, including:

- How can we make our culture more welcoming and inclusive?
- How can we expand recruiting efforts to more diverse talent pools?
- How will we define and measure progress?
- How do we develop a diverse leadership pipeline?
- How do we ensure traditionally marginalized voices are represented in decision-making?
- How can we embed fair, objective criteria into our talent management processes?
- How do we integrate DEI into our core values and overall business strategy?
- How can technology, including machine learning and artificial intelligence, help to accelerate progress in making DEI a business driver?
- How can we get leaders to embrace DEI as a business imperative and model behaviors that drive progress?
- How can we make everyone across the enterprise accountable for making DEI a business imperative?

BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

To advance DEI as a business imperative to drive growth, consider the following strategies:

Frame DEI as Leveraging the Power of Perspective

DEI has too often been interpreted as a fundamental conflict between advocates who want to correct historical and systemic inequities against detractors who believe focusing on DEI promotes “reverse discrimination” against dominant groups and threatens meritocracy.

In reality, in a business context, DEI is about drawing on diverse perspectives, ideas and experiences to optimize creativity, agility and problem-solving to meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders.

Rather than turning away from DEI because of sociopolitical backlash, organizations should reframe the objective as maximizing inclusion of talent, ideas and experiences to meet the challenges of an increasingly complex world. Doing that requires facing historical realities, bridging inequities and having some difficult conversations. But DEI is not about race and gender or righting perceived wrongs. At its core, it is about leveraging the genius that results from including all perspectives and experiences.

To be successful in a sharply divided world, employers must create strategies that promote and enable the power of perspective to drive progress.



Increase Leadership Accountability

Leaders are accountable for business results. DEI is a business imperative. Leaders should be accountable, as they are with other business priorities, for embedding DEI across the organization and in their teams. Most organizations have a long way to go beyond basic communication:

Are Your Leaders Accountable for Critical DEI Approaches?

We communicate that everyone has a responsibility to foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace.

76%

We consistently advocate for individuals to challenge themselves to learn about the messages they send to others and how they are perceived.

49%

We encourage individual contributors to become aware of unconscious biases and determine ways to remediate them.

52%

We set goals for individuals to see a diverse set of connections, experiences and perceptions.

22%

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Improving the Business Impact of DE&I: Creating a Culture for Success

The most effective approaches involve leadership commitment, accountability systems, transparency and continually listening to and engaging marginalized groups.

For example, in many companies, leaders' compensation bonuses are tied to key business objectives. Since DEI is a key business objective, incentives should be added for DEI. Performance and development goals for leaders should also include speaking openly and regularly about the importance of DEI to the business and participating in mentoring and modeling inclusive behaviors within their teams and across the enterprise.

Emphasizing DEI as a business driver is a big change for many organizations — and change starts at the top. Leaders must be incentivized to make DEI a greater priority.

Build a Network of Champions

It is not enough to have the C-Suite and other leaders accountable for DEI. A holistic approach requires a network of allies and advocates who can champion the change needed to accelerate the impact of DEI.

Examples of Allyship:

- White male executives can be allies to women of color who want to reach the same position in their careers.
- Cisgender employees can be allies to colleagues from the LGBTQI+ community.
- People from privileged backgrounds can be allies to those who lack the same economic stability and opportunities.

Building a strong network of DEI champions is critical for advancing DEI across the enterprise because:

- Allies help raise awareness and build empathy across majority groups. This drives progress.
- Allies can take on some of the heavy lifting to drive change, so the burden does not solely fall on top leaders and on marginalized groups to advocate for themselves. This reduces the likelihood of burnout and improves the chances for ongoing evolution.
- When allies speak up to challenge bias and model inclusive behaviors, it sets the tone for the culture and gives “social permission” for others to follow.
- Allies can provide valuable coaching, connections and sponsorship to help diverse talent advance.
- A network makes change scalable. The work is not dependent on just a few DEI leads.
- Even if key DEI personnel leave, the ally network persists and continues the mission.

In essence, allies widen the circle of responsibility for DEI efforts and ensure it gets woven into the fabric of the organization. Leveraging this support system is a best practice for impact and sustainability.



Embed DEI Across All Business Practices

DEI is not a program or an initiative; it is a cultural mindset. That requires incorporating the principles and actions associated with DEI in every aspect of the business.

The most effective strategies involve top-down leadership, bottom-up engagement, policy alignment and consistently evaluating and evolving DEI efforts to turn commitments into culture change.

Heaviest Areas of Investment for DEI, 2024

Embedding the values of DEI across the organization **71%**

Improving a DEI strategic plan **51%**

Create mentorship programs for diverse employees and high-potentials **50%**

Creating an understanding of the business need for DEI **47%**

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, HCM Outlook 2024





There are many ways to embed DEI across the organization. Many involve the use of AI and other technological innovations:

- Analyze compensation data to detect and address any pay equity issues between groups.
- Use data analytics to identify diversity gaps in leadership and develop pipelines.
- Implement inclusive talent practices like diverse slates for hiring/promotions, inclusive job descriptions and structured interviews.
- Mitigate bias in hiring by using AI to review resumes/applications anonymously and objectively evaluate candidates based on skills rather than demographics.
- Automate inclusive benefits enrollment and time-off requests to ensure equal access to opportunities.
- Leverage machine learning to promote diversity in supplier networks and advertising.
- Implement AI chatbots for confidential, 24/7 reporting of harassment and discrimination issues.
- Provide tools like captioning and screen readers to support those with disabilities.
- Automate translation of materials into multiple languages to improve accessibility.

Assess DEI Like Any Other Business Function

If you want DEI to impact the business, it needs to be assessed and evaluated just like any other business priority.

While DEI involves culture change in many organizations to realize its business potential, it should not be treated as a culture change initiative. It must be regarded as an organizational priority. It won't be considered equal to other business priorities unless it is measured the same way as financial, sales and operational imperatives are evaluated.



of organizations say they effectively use metrics to understand progress in DEI.

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study,
Improving the Business Impact of DE&I:
Creating a Culture for Success

Measuring DEI impact underscores that:

- What gets measured gets managed. Having clear metrics and accountability ensures sustained focus and effort.
- Data-driven insights on current DEI state and progress inform strategy and investments. Leadership can make evidence-based decisions.
- Transparency around DEI data and goals helps hold an organization accountable internally and externally. It's a benchmark against which stakeholders can evaluate performance.
- Metrics can reveal problem areas that need more attention and guide appropriate interventions. This focuses effort for maximum impact.
- Goals and data enable celebrating wins, which helps engagement and culture. Progress is motivating.

PREDICTIONS

AI Will Enable DEI Improvement

Employers will benefit from advancements in AI and other technological innovations that make it much easier to embed DEI across all functions. Tech providers across the HCM space are integrating solutions that can help reduce bias, diversify talent pools, improve access to technology for people with disabilities, support greater flexibility and inclusivity for people with disabilities, working parents and underrepresented groups, and much more. At the same time, AI engineers are focusing on ensuring these systems don't perpetuate or introduce biases based on race, gender or other factors. Some of these AI tools, such as text evaluation to minimize bias in job postings, have been around for years but are now ubiquitous to HCM technology offerings rather than add-ons or standalone solutions.

Hybrid Work Flexibility Becomes a Critical DEI Issue

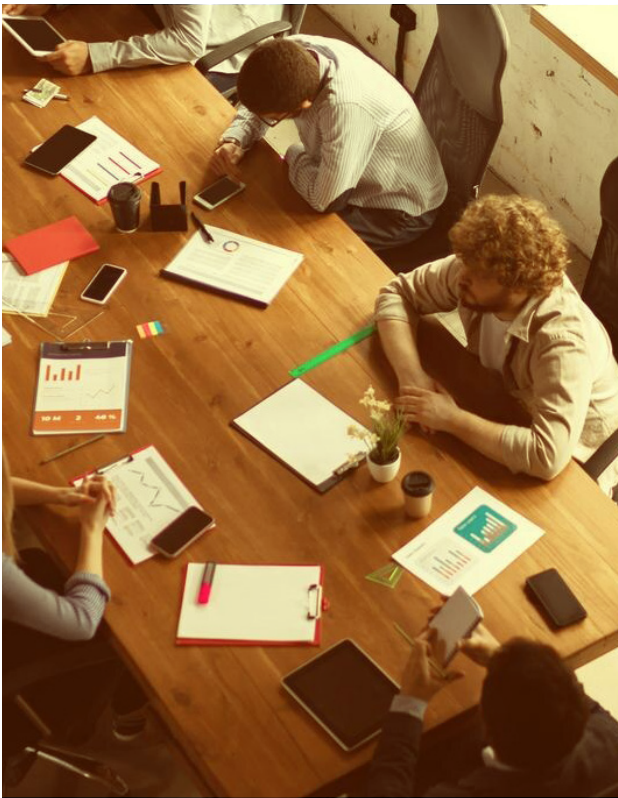
Employees' demands for work flexibility in the hybrid work environment are often seen as a sense of entitlement. In reality, employees chafed for generations over their inability to balance work and their personal lives. The remote work environment spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic provided flexibility many are unwilling to give up. Employees' responsibilities to their families, friends and community can vary greatly for many reasons, including economic status, race, gender, age or religion. Employers must realize flexibility in how, when or where people work is often not a convenience, but a requirement of circumstance and a critical component of an inclusive culture.

Data Analytics Will Drive Transparency and Accountability

The focus on DEI over the past few years, though not as impactful as hoped, has produced reams of data. Technology will make it easier than ever before to leverage the data for predictive and prescriptive analytics. Stakeholders — ranging from stockholders and government regulators to advocacy groups and employees seeking a real commitment to improvement — will pressure organizations to release DEI data and be transparent about their goals.

The Use of Ally Networks Will Accelerate

Our extensive interviews with employers on building a DEI culture reveal that they understand the need for an ecosystem of advocacy to drive culture change. Some organizations are leveraging ERGs and diversity councils, but they also recognize that progress requires more individuals actively demonstrating the beliefs and values that drive inclusion, collaboration and ultimately innovation. Once again, technology plays a role in aligning employees across an enterprise who are willing to take a leadership role.



Targeted Development of Underrepresented Groups Will Gain Traction

The underrepresentation of women, people of color and other diverse groups — especially in upper-level leadership — is too severe for employers to continue to turn a blind eye. Traditionally underrepresented populations must be developed for leadership roles. That requires targeted efforts that many employers have been slow to embrace. That again will change as pressure mounts for real progress in the diversity of leadership.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Laura Sehres

Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/
Chair DEI Steering Committee, PSCU

“The key to success in DEI is knowing what you want to do and then figuring out which levers to pull to make it happen. A lot of companies struggle with that and respond reactively to public statements on DEI without a lot of substance. And I get it. The field is incredibly expansive and it’s hard to know where to start. You have to determine your north star — where you are aiming your shift. Otherwise, you risk being all over the place and doing work that is not impactful. At PSCU, we have been able to focus our efforts and begin to make a meaningful impact by implementing our new strategic framework and accountability priorities. When we talk about moving the needle on DEI, I ask: What needle are you trying to move? What is your framework? What does success look like? You need to build a foundation first.”



Lacey Jacobs

DEI consultant and coach and CEO and Founder, The H.I.P. Network

“Recently I have seen conversations around DEI shift to being more resistant, more angry. I have mixed feelings about this. There is a part of me that’s sad that we as human beings haven’t come to the point where we can have these challenging, difficult conversations. And then I also understand it. If there is this level of sensitivity to something that touches us all so deeply, then we do have to potentially find other ways to have the conversations. I am still hopeful because, at the end of the day, this is about how we can be better human beings in relationship with one another. So, if we expand the way we think about DEI, it will help us see that there is no way we can get rid of it because it touches on the very fabric of everything we do and who we are — in and out of the workplace.”



Adonica Black

**Director, Global Diversity, Talent Development and Inclusion,
LexisNexis and member of the DEI Board**

“DEI work is not just the job of the DEI practitioner. Just as financial stewardship is the responsibility of everyone in the business — you are expected to be good financial stewards even if you don’t work in the finance department. Everyone should also be good cultural stewards. I think that is such a great way to capture it because it is everyone’s responsibility because you are part of the business. ... When DEI work is facing what they are calling a backlash and with all of the headlines, it will still never leave business. Culture will always be part of business. So it’s just how you want to brand it, what nomenclature you want to give it. DEI and culture are a part of business. ... It is the reality that when we look at the future of work, and the future availability of talent , those trends are shifting and they also have higher demands in regard to culture.”



AGENCY!

BY BRANDON HALL GROUP

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LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

L&D Must Choose:
Ubiquity or Irrelevance

04

CURRENT STATE

Learning and Development (L&D) teams are at a crossroads. The ROI on learning is needed more now than ever and teams need to step up and deliver on business impact.

To be considered business critical, Learning teams need to spend more energy and effort on showing how learning drives organizational performance. Measurement strategies are too focused on measuring volume (course completions, hours of training delivered, etc.) and learner experience (smile sheets, Level 1 evaluation, NPS or similar satisfaction measures).


L&D leaders need to shift their focus to how the business benefits from learning.

What is a priority today will not necessarily be a priority six months or even three months from now. This is the new VUCA reality. For example, one year ago, almost no one was talking about GenAI and today it dominates nearly every single work-related conversation. How will Learning and Development teams incorporate this breakthrough technology?

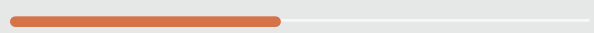
The skills gap brought on by the future of work directly applies to Learning and Development teams. In fact, that growing skills gap in teams is a driving force behind L&D becoming a data-driven analytics powerhouse. Another driving force is technology. For example, when asked about technology purchases and priorities for 2023, respondents to the Brandon Hall Group' 2023 Learning and Development Benchmarking Study ranked learning analytics tools at the bottom of the list while in the same study indicating that the ability to measure the effectiveness of learning remains the biggest challenge.

Greatest Challenges of L&D Teams

Ability to measure the business impact of learning **48%**



Upskilling employees at the speed of business **47%**



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Learning and Development Benchmarking

COMPLEXITIES

Learning teams the world over are being charged with readying their teammates for what is happening to work.

If these teams are going to have any hope of succeeding in their efforts, they are going to have to turn that same urgency to themselves. Everything from the approach to needs analysis to learning design and delivery and measurement and analytics has undergone massive evolution. GenAI is accelerating the pace of this change. It is time for L&D professionals to up their own game.

L&D has fought for a seat at the table and now must meet the same standards as every other business function -- and rightfully so. The problem is, many L&D professionals need skills development.



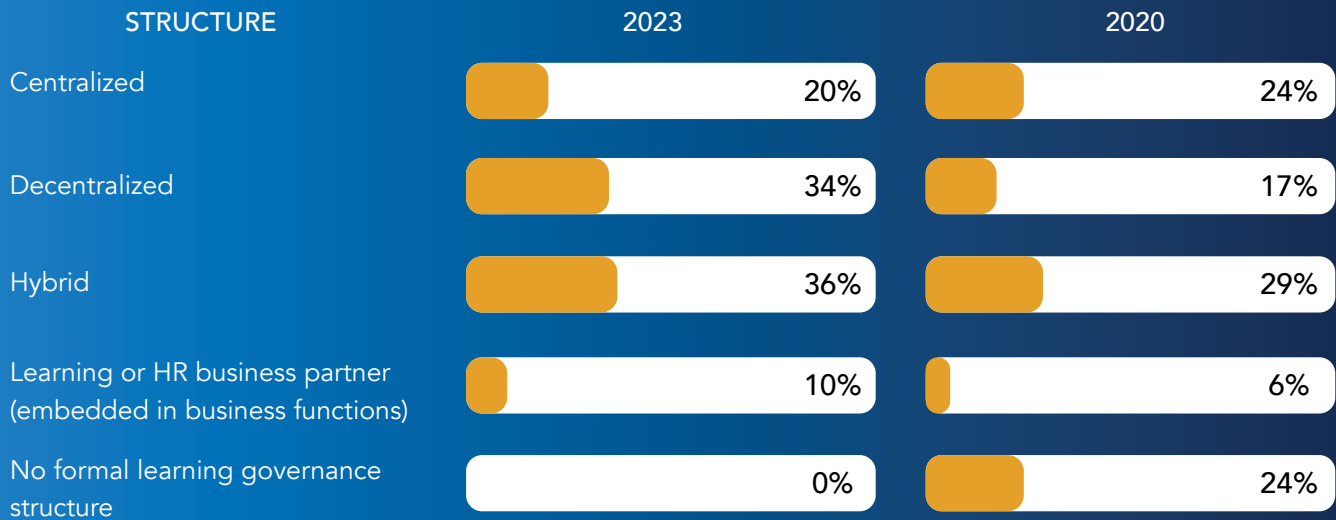
Least Mature Competencies on L&D Teams

- Data Science
- Data integrity and advanced analytics
- Neuroscience application
- Talent structure modeling
- Technology leadership
- Digital dexterity

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Learning and Development Benchmarking

L&D leaders also must consider how they can best design their function to better partner with other parts of the business. There has been a dramatic shift away from centralized L&D functions over the past few years and that evolution will likely continue.

Structure of L&D Function, 2023 vs. 2020



Source: Brandon Hall Group Learning and Development Benchmarking Studies, 2020 and 2023



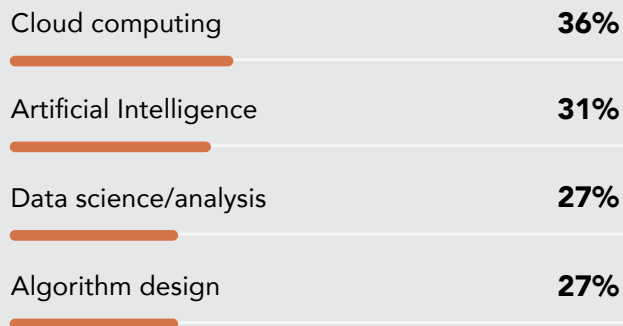
CONSEQUENCES

Failing to adapt learning and development strategies to meet emerging workforce challenges will severely hinder organizations in today's climate of disruption. Without urgent and innovative action, companies risk disengaged employees, skill gaps and lost competitiveness.

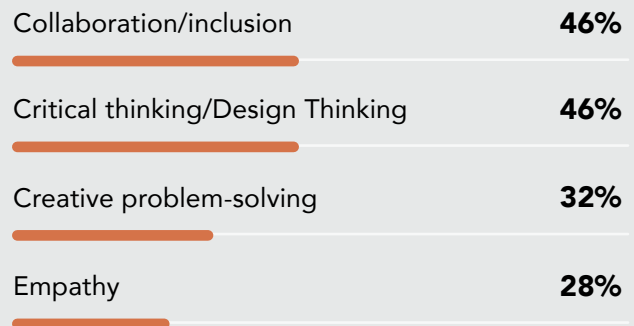
Outdated, irrelevant training will erode employee engagement and increase attrition. Workers expect on-demand, future-focused skills development opportunities from their employers. Static, compliance-based L&D breeds boredom and frustration, prompting top talent to look elsewhere.

Widening skills mismatches will also emerge within the workforce. As technology and markets evolve, roles require new capabilities. Without continuous upskilling and reskilling, employees struggle to keep pace. This skills gap leaves them unprepared for critical tasks, dragging down productivity.

Skills Most Often Required for New Job Roles



Skills Most Often Added for Existing Job Roles



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Learning & Development Benchmarking

Most critically, inaction on learning and development cedes competitive advantage. Rivals embracing more agile, technology-enabled L&D will have workforces better equipped for the future. They'll outmaneuver organizations with workers trapped in yesterday's skillsets.

Executives must make L&D reinvention a strategic priority. Though complex, transformative solutions like immersive learning, microlearning and skills analytics will enable the adaptable, future-fit workforces needed to thrive in turbulent times. Investing in people ultimately pays off in innovation, productivity and sustainable success.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Here are five critical questions companies should be answering related to Learning and Development:



How can we create more agile, future-focused learning opportunities to prepare our workforce for the evolving skills needs in our business?



How do we optimize our L&D spending to deliver maximum business impact and return on investment?



How can we unify a distributed workforce through virtual training and digital platforms while still nurturing our culture?



How will we continuously reskill employees to keep pace with rapid technology change and business priorities?



Are we innovating quickly enough with our L&D strategies to develop the adaptable, productivity-enhancing workforce we need to stay competitive?

BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

Here are five high-level strategies to improve the performance and relevance of learning:

Transform Learning into a Core Competency

At the end of the day, learning is a skill. Organizations must build that skill across the enterprise to navigate the realities of the VUCA world we live in. Not just a culture of learning, or an environment that recognizes and rewards and celebrates learning. Learning must become a core competency of the business. Every project, every deliverable, every meeting becomes an opportunity to learn. Learning programs, then, support the growth of that competency while addressing key business needs. The concept of a company as a learning organization isn't new, but it must become a key tenet of organizational development if a business hopes to survive the current evolution of work.



Accelerate Success Through GenAI

Agility and adaptability have never been more critical skills for Learning professionals. The pace of change and frequency of disruption in business and corporate life requires Learning to adjust plans on the fly. Many times, Learning teams are holders of process and organizational history, preferring a measured and methodical approach. A learning practice rooted in smart Adult Learning theory and leading practice technology solutions shouldn't change. What must change is the speed through which teams work. Quality and outcomes are more critical than ever, but lead times are becoming shorter and shorter. Learning teams must find a way to rapidly prototype, deploy and refine content without sacrificing effectiveness.

Generative AI technology provides one of the greatest opportunities to increase efficiency in learning practices. It isn't, as many fear, a replacement for human performance, but rather a tool for accelerating work. L&D teams should embrace GenAI's power and potential and leverage it wherever possible. This can be as simple as choosing technology for your learning tech stack that is AI-enabled or leveraging AI-specific tools to address workflow options. L&D can model for the broader business how AI fits in, and also leverage that practical experience to help others embrace its use.

Learn to Tell the Future

Learning leaders should be able to forecast the positive impact of modernizing learning practices on the business. This goes beyond simply building a business case for a learning-related purchase. Forecasting positive business impact involves reimagining the future of learning in your company and laying out the direct impact on business results. Embracing innovation in exploring new approaches, tools and technology will help with this. Focus on adopting immersive learning techniques that create an opportunity for true skill validation. By using immersive learning technology, learners can prove their capability. Create space that allows access to learning, which in turn opens up career growth for learners and drives measurable improvements in individual performance. That should reduce time to impact, which in turn delivers the business result in a much more impactful way.

More Governance, Instead of Less

It may seem counterintuitive to expand governance in this environment, however, most organizations overlook employee perspective in learning governance. Who better to help shape strategies and plans intended to help their growth and long-term employability than the learners who are most directly impacted? Consider assembling subgroups of functional employees from various disciplines like technology, finance, sales, etc., while rounding out enterprise governance teams with employee presence.

Invest in a Robust Learning Technology Approach

Planning is often the first discipline to be jettisoned when time pressure becomes a factor. That is disastrous for Learning teams when it comes to evaluating and planning for learning technology investment. Instead, work with IT and procurement partners to evaluate current and future needs. Define the criteria for use cases, consider tech changes and then execute with discipline on a consistent schedule. L&D must essentially accelerate traditional technology evaluation processes to run in a near-continuous cycle of evaluation recommendations. This will require aggressive partnerships with technology partners to protect investments and relationships, especially as more frequent adjustments to the mix of tech tools may be required.



PREDICTIONS

Learning Leaders Will Become General Managers

Economic pressures will continue and businesses will demand more accountability for positive bottom-line impact. Learning leaders will spend more time overseeing the direct delivery of business outcomes. Learning as a revenue stream will become an expectation. Learning leaders must concern themselves far less with traditional learning outcomes (learner satisfaction and test results) and far more with business-driven KPIs, including top-line revenue, direct cost reduction and other key operational deliverables impacted by learning efforts. Learning strategy will assume its place in organizational business strategy and be the pathway to the delivery of value.

The Rise of the Learning Business Partner Will Accelerate

Brandon Hall Group research showed at the start of 2023 that some 10% of corporate Learning teams were structured as learning business partners. This approach, which mirrors the role of the HR business partner as the face of Learning to the business, is the only way to solidify the alignment of Learning with the core priorities of the business. Learning teams will become primarily architects of learning instead of drivers of learning. All learning professionals will become skilled learning strategists — because strategy will be the job.

Learning Developers Will Become Skilled AI Engineers

The power of generative AI to simplify, streamline and accelerate the creation of content means that content developers will need to become skilled AI engineers. Proliferating AI capability for content authoring means that subject matter experts will become validators of content and not authors. Instructional designers will need to learn to leverage the full capability of generative AI to accelerate production and shorten time to delivery. AI can adhere to sound instructional design principles; developers will need to manage projects and use AI tools well.



Learning Agility Will Become the 'Master Skill' for All

The accelerated evolution of work and the workplace that marked the first few years of the 2020s will only intensify. As such, for all teammates, the ability to learn in first-time situations, to learn quickly and to adapt to VUCA conditions will be the skill that separates success from failure. There's a certain amount of innate ability required where learning agility is concerned, but companies need to also consider how they can best foster the development of this skill set. Creating a culture where learning is valued, rewarded and expected will help this effort.

Learning Will Evolve into a Revenue Generating Machine

More companies will offer learning not only to current customers but to prospective customers and the public as well. By creating impactful learning experiences that also drive brand/product awareness, learning will lead to increased sales, more demand and lead generation. The potential to become a revenue-generating machine is significant. Even internally developed learning that isn't "product-specific," but addresses a broader learning need, can create appeal to the external market.



INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Heather Lambert

Vice President of Learning and Organizational Development, Wellpath

“The focus for 2024 is ensuring we have agile solutions key to business initiatives. This is possible if we deliver relevant work that provides actionable insights into the human aspect of every project. We must embrace the available automation and learning solutions in the market and ensure we deliver pragmatic and less theoretical solutions to help the business solve challenges in real time. If you can buy, automate, or use technology to scale your operations, do it. Free up your people to be critical problem solvers. L&OD professionals must know their discipline and showcase their financial and business acumen, data fluency, and project management skills.”



Susan Neumans Van Buren, PhD

**Manager of Human Resources and Training,
CHELCO – A Touchstone Energy Cooperative**

“In the evolving Learning and Development landscape of 2024, we L&D professionals must remember the importance of foundational principles, such as thorough needs assessment and strategic alignment, while adeptly navigating the integration of the newest tools, like Artificial Intelligence, into our strategies.”



Steve Thompson

**CLO at 5app and former Senior Director of Learning and
Talent Development at Greystar**

“One of the biggest challenges L&D teams will face in 2024 is the ever-increasing amount of “noise” in the learning landscape. With so many new technologies and AI tools available, it can be difficult to cut through the clutter and identify the right content for each learner. L&D teams need to develop strategies for filtering this noise and ensuring that the right content is delivered and available to the right person at the right time. Striking a balance between embracing these new technologies and staying focused on the core business objectives is even more critical. This means creating a learning culture that is fit for purpose to ensure new technologies/systems/approaches are fully embedded and more importantly, adopted.”



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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Reimagined:
Preparing for a Complex World

05

CURRENT STATE

Leadership Development must undergo a deep and massive transformation to build the adaptable, collaborative leaders needed to navigate the ever-increasing complexity in our world of work.

What most organizations are doing now is not the answer: 81% say they will make major changes over the next year, according to the latest Brandon Hall Group research. Use of assessments — before and after Leadership Development activities — should top the list. More than half (52%) of organizations surveyed by Brandon Hall Group in late 2023 said they plan to do this, but we urge everyone to focus on assessments, even if you are using them to one degree or another now.

How Employers Plan to Improve Leadership Development in 2024

More focus on how leaders can better coach and mentor employees

79%

Increase the use of data and analytics to measure leadership development effectiveness

37%

Better succession planning

53%

Increase the diversity of the leadership pipeline

29%

Increase the focus on assessing leader readiness for next roles

52%

Increase focus on remote/hybrid leadership

26%

Heavier focus on developing high-potentials

39%

Develop distinct program(s) for team leadership

25%

More emphasis on preparing first-time and frontline leaders

39%

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Developing Great Leaders: What's Your Recipe for Success?

With leadership being so complex and with the urgency for improvement so high, organizations need to understand the relevant skills leaders and prospective leaders have before beginning a learning journey. They also need to assess after an initiative — with an emphasis on practical application of skills in real-life scenarios or simulations — to determine whether the desired proficiency has been reached or whether additional training is needed. Leaders should not be expected to move into new roles or the next level of learning without having the proper skills foundation.

At least two-thirds of organizations participating in our research indicated that it is important to improve nine different skills or competencies for modern leaders to be effective:

Most Important Skills/Competencies Needed for Effective Leadership



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Developing Great Leaders: What's Your Recipe for Success?





To truly build these capabilities, assessments should be leveraged to measure a baseline starting point and identify the relevant development gaps to be focused upon. Otherwise, development will be unnecessarily broad and less effective. These assessments and their results do not stand in a vacuum. The entire process of working with a coach, whether internal or external, should include relevant and valid assessments that can pinpoint the potential for success and the likelihood of compatibility between the leader and the next role.

Organizations recognize that leaders must evolve as we tackle the ongoing adjustment to hybrid work and a workforce made up of more generations than ever. Leaders who embrace agility and flexibility, foster a culture of innovation, and are comfortable with ambiguity elicit the maximum performance from their team members. Rigid thinking and hierarchical structures inhibit the ability to adapt quickly.

Overall, leadership development is becoming more experiential, grounded in power skills, data-driven and personalized to develop the responsive, capable leaders needed today.

COMPLEXITIES

Employers face several significant challenges in improving leadership development, with holding leaders accountable for applying new capabilities on the job topping the list.

Top Challenges in Developing Great Leaders

51% Leaders not held accountable for applying new capabilities

49% Developing leaders takes a backseat to short-term business results

46% Lack of investment

46% No clear, consistent model for what we expect from leaders

45% Lack of training reinforcement and skills practice

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Great Leaders: What's Your Recipe for Success?



But there is a common thread across all the top challenges — a lack of strategic commitment to changing the status quo of Leadership Development and leadership itself. If development takes a back seat to short-term business results, training budgets don't reflect the business imperative to improve leadership. And if there is no consistent model for expectations and little commitment to letting leaders practice their skills in a safe environment, progress is virtually impossible.

The most frustrating thing about reviewing the research results year after year in Leadership Development is that the challenges have remained the same for years. In addition, employers know what they need to do to improve, as the data below illustrates. Most organizations have simply not had the will to change. Hopefully, the sense of urgency will increase as we grapple with economic uncertainty, the advent of AI-driven technologies and a multi-generational workforce that has shown an unwillingness to tolerate the status quo.

Leadership Development Changes Most Frequently Suggested



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Developing Great Leaders: What's Your Recipe for Success?

CONSEQUENCES

The implications are clear — Leadership Development must reinvent and transform to build the skilled, agile leaders that volatile business environments demand. Legacy competency-based programs have become insufficient, at best. Companies that fail to prioritize experiential, skills-focused development will be left with leaders lacking the capabilities to guide modern organizations.

Power skills like influence and empathy will become baseline requirements for leaders rather than nice-to-haves. Without savvy technical and business acumen, leaders will be ill-equipped to leverage data, weigh risks and drive results. Changes to Leadership Development must be adapted to fit the needs of tomorrow's organizations. Otherwise, the leadership required to lead in the future will be strikingly absent and the problems of the present day will only worsen.

If companies do not utilize AI-enabled analytics for unbiased high-potential identification, development efforts will remain disjointed and subjective. Lacking immersive simulations, leaders will not be able to gain critical skills safely. Without personalized, continuous learning models, emerging leaders will be unable to develop the ever-evolving capabilities that ambiguity demands.

Essentially, the consequences of stagnant leadership development are dire — companies will face skill mismatches, poor succession planning, lackluster execution and an inability to thrive amid volatility. By contrast, those investing in experiential, skills-based and data-driven development will gain a sustainable leadership edge to outperform competition and lead through disruptive change.



CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Here are critical questions organizations should consider when looking at improving Leadership Development:

1 How can we leverage immersive simulations and technologies like AR/VR to provide realistic leadership development?

2 What key power skills like coaching, collaboration, resilience and empathy should we prioritize when developing our leaders?

3 In what new ways can we demonstrate the value and need for applying new leadership capabilities, then hold leaders accountable for being more effective?

4 How do we provide continuous leadership development focused on agility, resilience and managing ambiguity?

5 How can we use AI not only for unbiased, data-driven identification of high-potential leaders but also for creating personalized development paths for leaders?

BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

Here are five high-level strategies to transform Leadership Development:

Commit to Immersive Learning

Immersive leadership simulations enabled by AR, VR and mixed reality will provide realistic settings to safely build critical skills. Leaders can practice high-stakes conversations now. But with the available technology, you can increase engagement and learning retention and use cohorts so participants can also learn from their peers. Simulations modeling real-world complexities are integral for leadership development.

Focus on Power Skills

Key power skills like emotional intelligence, collaboration, resilience, communication and empathy separate good leaders from great ones. These abilities enable leaders to align stakeholders, resolve conflicts and connect with teams and bounce back after defeat. When leaders reflect an inclusive orientation by fostering belonging, broadening networks of colleagues and empowering followers, positive outcomes such as engagement and innovation result.

Build a Culture of Continuous Leader Learning

For decades, leadership development (and learning in general) has occurred through events that take leaders away from their work. The level of transformation needed in Leadership Development requires an ongoing approach. A practical, experiential and immersive approach to learning — combined with curated microlearning blended with AI-recommended development and personalized coaching — builds a culture of ongoing learning.

Learning that promotes experimentation, introspection and smart risk-taking will push leaders outside their comfort zones. In this manner, leaders can immerse themselves in new technologies and challenges. Cultivating a growth mindset in leaders will reinforce that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. This ongoing approach also demonstrates commitment on the part of the organization, which has often been lacking and leads to an absence of accountability for change.

Prioritize Coaching

Continuous learning must go far beyond courses and even scenario-based approaches. Transforming Leadership Development requires a mindset change by many leaders, which requires reflection and often significant behavior change that requires ongoing encouragement, coaching and accountability.

Leadership is a journey that never ends, so leaders should have someone who can support them while also holding their feet to the fire when they struggle or lose focus or commitment. Online coaching platforms are proliferating, as are the number of certified coaches. Organizations must determine the role coaching should play and take steps to make coaching effective. A commitment to coaching leaders also sets an example for the leaders to coach their own teams, which is also important for talent development.

Embrace AI and Talent Analytics

Leveraging AI and talent analytics enables unbiased, data-driven identification of high-potentials based on performance, aspiration and agility. Supplementing nominations with predictive analytics will minimize bias and improve succession planning. AI can be leveraged to create customized development plans for rising leaders. AI systems can analyze each individual's strengths, weaknesses and goals to generate personalized recommendations for training, mentoring and other growth opportunities.



Make Deeper Commitments to High-Potentials

Employers talk endlessly about the importance of developing future leaders. But how serious are organizations about developing high-potentials when our research shows that more than half don't formally identify them or are transparent about what high-potential means and how these candidates will be evaluated? Only one-third of employers help these employees grow in their current roles and few provide incentives or actively support work-life balance. More organizations need to walk the talk and make a deeper commitment to high-potential development.

PREDICTIONS

AI Will Unlock High-Potential Talent and Transform Succession Planning

AI will enable more predictive and unbiased identification of high-potential talent in nearly every enterprise and across industries. By analyzing data from performance reviews, engagement surveys, assessments and career progression, AI talent analytics will identify candidates with strong capability, aspiration and agility to take on bigger roles. This will supplement human decision-making with data-driven insights.

AI-driven assessment and recommendation engines will match high-potentials with personalized development opportunities like stretch assignments, mentoring relationships and upskilling. AI chatbots and virtual coaches will provide personalized and scalable coaching. AI tutors will curate hyper-personalized learning paths by analyzing skills gaps. Overall, AI will better organize succession planning and leadership development for high-potentials. The focus will shift from intuition-based nomination to an integrated data-driven approach to objectively identify, assess, develop and deploy emerging leaders.

Leadership Development Will Become VR-Driven

Digitally enabled simulations will continue to be central and significant for Leadership Development.

Immersive leadership simulations recreate leadership scenarios to practice decision-making and skills. Using AR/VR to increase the fidelity of the simulations creates more realistic experiences and will lead to more engaged and effective development.



Every Leader Gets a Coach

Coaching will provide a rare, unbiased and honest point of view that helps leaders see their blind spots, warn them of possible derailing behavior and improve self-awareness.

Virtual coaching will be developed at scale and provide development that leads to increased communication, strategic thinking and emotional intelligence skills faster than typical development programs. This individualized approach will allow a laser focus on each leader's unique goals and needs.

Leadership is almost always lonely and highly stressful. Coaches provide a confidential sounding board for support and allow a safe space in which to develop resilience, balance and mental fitness, so that leaders can perform and even thrive under pressure. Leaders at all levels will be empowered by their coaches, which then will increase their ability to have crucial conversations, take smart risks and build confidence resulting from the non-judgmental partnership between coach and client.

Intergenerational Mentoring Will Gain Traction

Many leaders — especially those at higher levels or with mature careers — can benefit by getting a deeper understanding of the values, beliefs, motivations and capabilities of the emerging workforce. Leaders have just as much to learn from generations Y and Z as those workers can learn from established leaders. Intergenerational mentoring can help organizations bridge gaps and increase understanding and collaboration between different demographic groups. Some progressive organizations are doing this now and getting good results. We believe it will continue to expand.

Team-Based Learning Will Increase

Leadership development for all will continue to expand because of the changing nature of work. As business becomes more complex and faster-paced, leaders need to get comfortable with learning with and from each other since leadership development will certainly include team-based learning approaches. Taking this approach shows that organizations recognize the importance of collaboration and shared knowledge.

With remote and hybrid work becoming more prevalent, leaders need enhanced skills for building trust, influencing others and managing performance in a distributed workforce. Leaders must influence peers across functional silos, so Leadership Development will emphasize cross-functional relationship-building.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Kimberly Currier

Global Vice President of Leadership Development, AECOM

"Our chief strategy officer tells me, 'you are planting seeds for trees that you'll never stand underneath,' and that says it all. Fundamentally, we believe in leadership development over the long haul. If you're doing it well, you're thinking of leadership development at all levels.

At AECOM, our culture is one of "leadership at all levels." We build a culture and pipeline that helps us align at all levels and stages of our employees' careers. Our culture of leadership aligns to our values and our purpose, which is to deliver a better world. Open your aperture!"



Amy Kropp

Senior Vice President of Human Resources, Jazwares

"Technology is continuing to make a massive impact on leadership development. There are several ways we can leverage technology and analytics, but what will be the cost? We have lots of opportunity to improve leadership development at Jazwares, just like many other companies. We are in a constant and lightning-fast rate of growth. We need to develop more leaders who are equipped and ready to take on this work as we continue to grow."



Heidi Bedier

Director of Leadership Development, Paragon

"In our organization with technology talent and leaders, we focus on growing their leadership capacities and capabilities. We are building out "leadership solutions" and really honing in on a leadership development offering around things such as one-on-one leadership coaching, looking at social style and a behavioral observation model that helps our leaders learn to be versatile. Through individual leadership coaching, we are trying to help individual leaders uncover and discover what their leadership vision and legacy is. How do those things show up in their daily practices, habits, and behaviors? Are they aligned, or not, to the organizational vision and values? This growth and development process is critical for maintaining our leadership capabilities and pipeline."



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TALENT ACQUISITION

Struggling to Balance
High-Tech and Humanity

06

CURRENT STATE

Finding the right talent for the right job has never been as challenging as it is today. Unemployment in the U.S. is hovering at 4% or less. That translates into fewer workers available for open jobs.

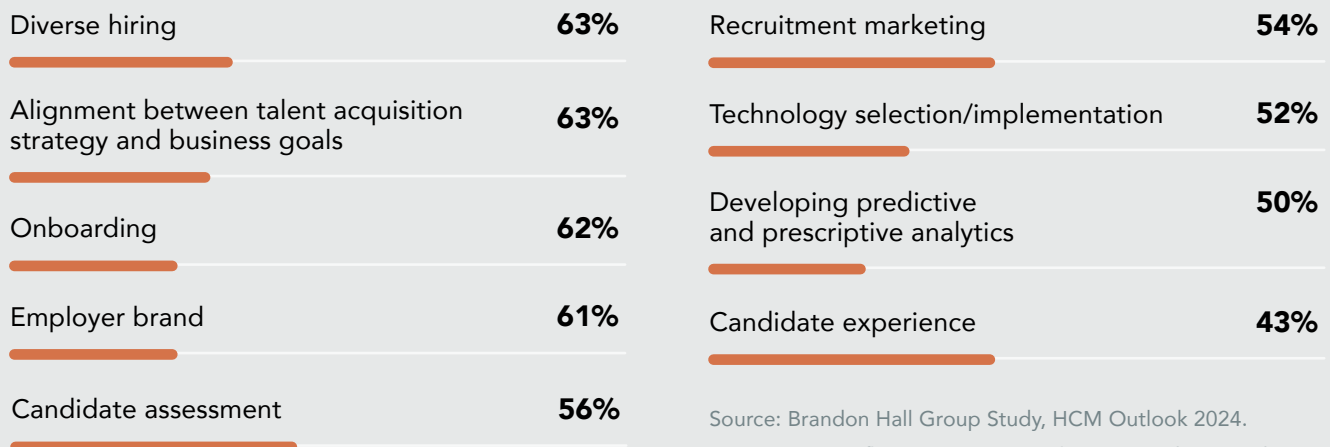
In fact, the latest available statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor indicate that there is less than one unemployed person (.7) per job opening. Globally, the unemployment rate hovers around closer to 6%. Talent Acquisition (TA) teams are under enormous pressure to perform.

The profession has relied heavily on technology to gain efficiencies, but what has resulted is a kind of black hole into which qualified candidates sometimes fall.

Given that TA is the gateway to the longer-term employee experience and the beginning of the relationship between employer and employee, TA teams find themselves having to shift their attention to the candidate experience. So many hiring processes have seemingly been on set-it-and-forget-it mode for so long that many companies don't even realize what's happening when workers try to find a way in. Unfortunately, our research shows that candidate experience sits at the bottom of the investment list for 2024 (see below).

Into this environment enters the evolution of work that is only beginning to unfold. New ways of working are leading companies to create jobs that never existed before or requiring candidates to have new skills that have never been needed before. Every change to a hiring requirement puts even more pressure on an already narrow talent pool.

Top Areas of Investment (Time and Money) in Talent Acquisition in 2024*



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, HCM Outlook 2024.

*Percentages reflect organizations planning moderate or heavy investment, in time and money, for the categories listed.

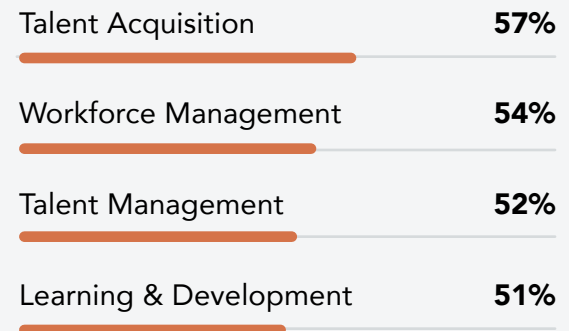
COMPLEXITIES

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. That advice is usually given to job seekers in preparing them for an interview. However, this sentiment is also true for Talent Acquisition. A function that is critical to the successful operation of any business, TA is equal parts marketing, customer relations, production and HR. The push to meet numbers coupled with the need to build and nurture relationships with candidates can divide the attention and the energy of TA teams.

Most choose to rely on technology to help manage this struggle. Therefore, TA is the area of HCM practice that is the most comfortable with the presence and evolution of technology. Applicant tracking systems (ATS) were among the first HR technologies to be applied widely and to incorporate machine learning and robot process automation (RPA).

Because TA professionals have always been early adopters of technology-driven advances in workflow, the industry is well-positioned to lead the way in adaptability to new realities. TA is really embarking on phase two or three of a transformation that's been in the works since the first ATS appeared on the scene. Because of that, how TA adapts to this latest wave of evolution and finds its footing in the new world of work can offer a blueprint not only to other HR professionals but to teams across the business.

Organizations Expecting HCM Technology Spending Increases, Next 12 Months*



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, HCM Technology: How to Transform HR into a Digital Powerhouse

*Data is for organizations with more than 1,000 employees.

The emergence of Generative AI gives organizations a host of new tools to hire great talent, but brings the risks of bias, data security, ethics and the human role. GenAI tools have limitations in reasoning and judgment. TA teams must maintain their vigilance to ensure their talent pools remain diverse and inclusive and are ready to comply with unfolding regulations on the use of AI and machine learning in hiring decisions.

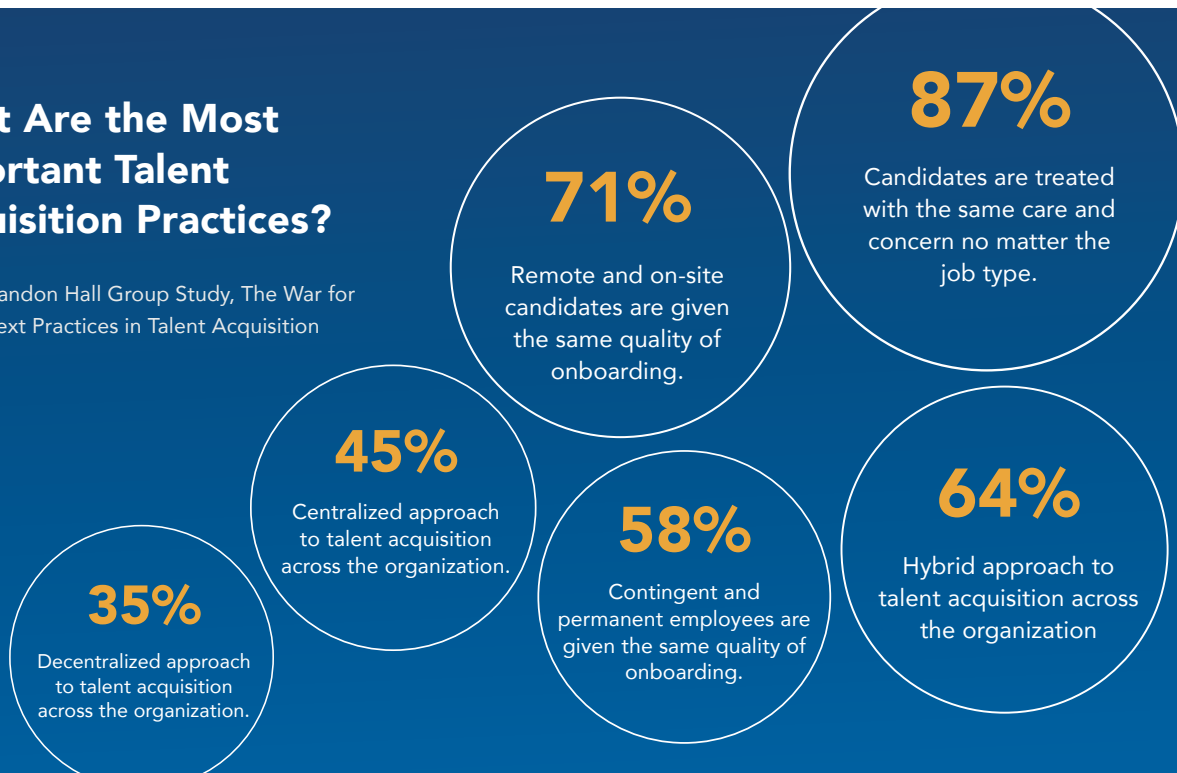
Overall, while emerging innovations offer promise, realizing their potential requires holistic workforce strategies. With diligent planning and a focus on human strengths, businesses can navigate talent acquisition's complexities to build capable, future-ready workforces. TA processes must continue to evolve and point the way for what is possible in AI-driven work.

CONSEQUENCES

As the entry point to the employee lifecycle, employers simply can't afford to get TA wrong on any level. The risks of inaction span financial, cultural, regulatory and competitive dimensions. As skills needs escalate, outdated hiring practices will leave roles unfilled for longer, costing money in the form of increased contract labor costs or loss of productivity. Lagging recruitment technology will allow rivals to outmaneuver and out-scale. In today's demanding talent market, organizations that fail to meet change with courage cement their eventual decline.

What Are the Most Important Talent Acquisition Practices?

Study: Brandon Hall Group Study, The War for Talent: Next Practices in Talent Acquisition



Disengaged employees and a lack of diversity will erode corporate culture. The recruitment process is where companies begin training teammates on what the organizational culture is and how they need to show up within that culture. If the transition between recruitment workflows and onboarding processes is weak or non-existent, you are putting that new employee relationship at risk before the people even show up for work. Onboarding effectiveness leads to longevity. Missteps lead to turnover.

Not only that, but bias risk and unmanaged automation can also put the organization at risk for costly regulatory violations. Legal requirements are already emerging around the use of automation, GenAI, and machine learning in hiring decisions. TA leaders must ensure their companies are complying with this new area of enforcement or risk significant negative economic impact.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Here are critical questions companies should be answering regarding talent acquisition and the future of work:

- How can we implement integrated workforce planning to balance emerging skills needs with retention of existing capabilities?
- What safeguards and oversight are required to ensure our AI recruitment technologies mitigate, rather than amplify, biases?
- How can we support our recruiters in embracing AI as an empowering collaboration tool?
- What governance frameworks must we establish to ensure ethical usage and oversight of generative AI in hiring?
- Does our current Talent Acquisition strategy allow our hiring speed, pipeline and candidate experience to remain competitive as market demands escalate?



BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

Here are four high-level strategies to address the critical issues in talent acquisition:

Verify that Automation is Working as Intended

Talent Acquisition has long been the leading edge in the application automation, machine learning and AI technology. In that push to automate and adopt, many process decisions were left to technology and haven't necessarily been validated by TA professionals. With even more automation and AI capabilities being introduced across the spectrum of work, now is the time for TA leaders and their teams to validate that processes and automations are working as intended (not just as designed).

Regular review of decision filters and "rejected" candidates is key to ensuring algorithms are delivering the best candidates without bias. Leverage the efficiency that comes from additional technical capability, but pay attention to how it is working and be diligent in evaluating the overall effectiveness so changes can be made sooner rather than later to minimize any potential damage.

Expand Screening Tools to Get Holistic View of Candidate

Skills profiles and requirements for new work are in a constant state of change. Because of that, questionnaires, assessments and other automated screening tools may, in fact, be outdated — or soon will be. Consider redefining screening tools to capture transferable/interrelated skills beyond just the primary skills requirements.

Valid assessments to help measure capabilities such as learning agility, cognitive reasoning or problem solving will become increasingly important. Looking for indications that a candidate is motivated by learning or comfortable with change through tools like sentiment analysis of resumes and cover letters may reveal helpful insights. Tools must create as holistic a view of a candidate as possible when it's unlikely a resume will reflect an exact match to experience that may be required.

Candidate Experience is Primary

Talent Acquisition has always been the place where automation has found an early home. AI is no different, expanding the efficiency to be gained during the hiring process. It's important to ensure the candidate's experience is easy, informative and encouraging even if candidates don't interact directly with a human until midway or further through the process.

Treating every candidate like a potential employee, no matter how far they progress on any single job opening, creates a sense of desire to belong for the candidate. Long-term relationships with candidates will be the competitive advantage as the coming war for talent heats up even further.

Onboarding Must Be Seamless

TA teams must partner with all functions of HR and operations to ensure that newly hired teammates have a smooth transition and are set up to succeed. Companies need to align on common language and definitions for terms. Processes must be clearly documented and transparent to employees, candidates and managers alike. Do not trust the onboarding handoff solely to technology. Otherwise, just as the front-end black hole of the recruiting process can eliminate highly skilled talent, an ineffective initial phase of onboarding can redirect a candidate's attention to an offer from a competing organization.





PREDICTIONS

AI-Driven Discrimination Will Put Companies at Risk

Using automated and AI-driven selection processes, hiring for remote-first work environments and the decentralization of work will put increased pressure on employment regulations/laws. Most employment law is geographically based. How do you ensure fair and equitable practice when geography is no longer the primary consideration in hiring? AI-driven discrimination in hiring will require deeper scrutiny. There is already a New York City ordinance around the use of AI algorithms in hiring. The first fines for discrimination were issued in late summer 2023 under existing discrimination laws. New AI regulation will only increase the level of scrutiny.

Blanket Return-to-Office Policies Will Reshape the Workforce

The showdown over return to office versus remote and hybrid work will result in the decimation of the workforce and the rise in the gig economy, ultimately costing employers more money in the long run. Simply put, if you force an employee to return to a work location on a set schedule when they haven't needed to in the prior four years, they will find an employer willing to allow them to maintain their remote work arrangement. Some companies are already laying off U.S.-based workers who refuse to return to the office and replacing them with offshore resources. Time will tell whether that pays off financially, but it will most certainly take a toll on organizational expertise and productivity — not to mention brand reputation.



Recruiters Will Become Talent Brokers

The role of recruiter has always been two parts salesperson and one part coach. However, in a capability desert, where there simply isn't the supply of talent to meet needs, relationships will become even more critical. The companies who win will be those where the talent brokers in the Recruiting function can capitalize on years of relationship building and looking through unbiased eyes to find the best candidates from those already inside the organization. Much of the new capability in companies will have to be built. The question of whether a company is going to build talent or buy talent will be rendered moot because skills aren't readily available to buy in the external applicant pool.

Onboarding Will Mature and Expand

First and foremost, a common language around onboarding is critical. Until all areas of the organization are speaking the same language around this critical process, gaps will continue. Defining roles and responsibilities for each stage is a key first step. Teams should define each stage and the primary goal as well as who is responsible for the content, process, and follow-up within each stage. Regular checkpoints, tracking and feedback loops are crucial to ensuring continuous improvement is realized. Missteps in onboarding lead to early turnover, so onboarding plan must extend through at least the first year of employment. Over-reliance on technology and employee self-service processes is a mistake at this stage. High touch that is reduced gradually over time will lead to better success.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Anthony Katz

**Vice President and Head of Human Resources,
Advanced Recovery Systems, LLC**

“One of the biggest challenges heading into 2024 is the availability of the workforce and how your organization has competitive advantage to acquire and retain talent. The workforce has changed forever coming out of the pandemic. Most mid-size companies are still trying to crack that nut. Specifically, how do we really measure the remote workforce and what will we do if we don’t see improvement?”



Dr. Gillian McKnight-Tutein

**Chief Educational Equity Officer,
Colorado Department of Higher Education**

“The future of Talent Acquisition is undergoing a seismic shift. At no other time in history have we had to intentionally balance the efficiency of such high-tech options with the need for high touch so much. The future landscape of Talent Acquisition should prioritize fairness, transparency and the celebration of diverse perspectives. While there will be a surge of the use of artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, and machine learning algorithms, recruitment strategies must be proactive and include integrated retention efforts that create the best employee experiences. Employees are no longer afraid to leave within the first year of employment. We can’t fake good culture. We can no longer contain bad experiences. Prospective employees are also using the same resources to find out the truth about our organizations.”



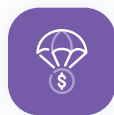
Akshay Loomba

VP Talent Acquisition, Unifi Services

“AI is entering our lives faster than we could imagine or control! In FY24, Unifi Talent Acquisition’s focus will be around strategically incorporating our existing tech suite and AI to enhance our effectiveness as a function. The focus will be on leveraging AI for enhanced candidate experience through precise job matches, AI-enabled candidate screening and predictive analytics in recruitment, reinforcing our commitment to optimal job fit and better ROIs.”

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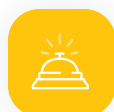
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Leonard Somtil

Meera Basu 2 Badges 100 Points

Rob Haruki 1 Badge 75 Points

Yasmin Diaz 1 Badge 55 Points

News

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HUMAN RESOURCES

Can HR Rise to New,
Enduring Challenges?

07

CURRENT STATE

Human Resources (HR) has been preparing for this season of work for years. The question is, are HR leaders and practitioners ready to take the lead they must take?

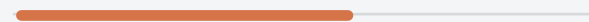
The world has changed. Work has changed. What has been described as the VUCA environment is the new reality in business. No team in the organization is better equipped, nor better positioned, to lead through this new reality of work than HR.

HR is in the best position to lead because HR is first and foremost the champion of the employee. HR has always advocated for a holistic view of human capital. HR teams that have successfully navigated the transition from transactional doers to strategic leaders are the reason companies thrive in this newest era.

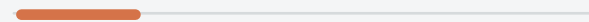
The workforce is more complex than ever before. Ensuring an environment that recognizes, values and protects individual expression has never been more critical. There is more generational diversity than ever before. The reality of the influencer economy is putting enormous pressure on employers to compete for talent — especially for jobs requiring new skills. This, in turn, drives compensation levels ever higher. Because salaries are generally the largest cost to the business, this is also driving more narrow profit margins.

Organizations Hiring for New Job roles or Job Categories

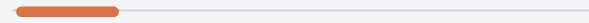
Yes, we are currently hiring for new job roles/categories. **59%**



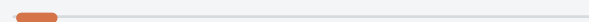
We are considering adding new job roles. **21%**



No, we are only hiring for existing job roles. **14%**



We plan to add new job roles/categories in 2024. **6%**



Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, Hiring for New Skills and New Roles

Evolving technology is introducing unprecedented skills gaps and ethical challenges. Diversity, equity and inclusion are simultaneously more critical and less embraced by leadership teams. Benefits are no longer only about a good insurance plan, but about how to make life work. Employers are being called upon to play a pivotal role in enabling worker success across all dimensions of their lives.

The CHRO must rise as the linchpin leader in the midst of this chaotic reality. Companies are looking for clarity and simplicity at every turn. HR leaders can answer that call. The question is, will they?

COMPLEXITIES

A new employment environment requires leadership that is able to make sound decisions in the moment, respond with empathy and compassion and protect the longer-term economic viability of the business by keeping people-related costs under control. There are so many more models of working now that HR teams cannot afford to limit their thinking. Companies that insist on a traditional employment relationship will lose out on the best talent available.

HR in Search of Solutions

We have the tools to help employees adapt to all the various technologies we use. **54%**

We have AI-powered tools to pull together data that can show the need for improvements in our employee experience. **41%**

We have insights we need on employee experience between geographies, levels, functions, demographics and groups. **50%**

We have the right technology our teams need to successfully navigate the marketplace. **31%**

Source: Brandon Hall Group Study: Culture Eats Strategy: Is Your Employee Experience What You Intended?

The regulatory environment around employment presents additional complexities as well. In the US, fines and penalties are being assessed against companies that are not governing their use of artificial intelligence and machine learning (ML) in hiring processes. Additional guidelines are being released by the U.S. government on the use of AI in business in general, which will eventually lead to changes in employment regulations and laws. Existing processes, which have been largely unchanged since the post-9/11 refresh of employment eligibility guidelines, are being updated; changes to wage and hour laws are on the horizon.

Globally, the reaction of government to workplace issues is even more aggressive. From sweeping rulings in Asia around the topics of mental health and employer liability for the after-hours behavior of employees, to the ongoing challenges in GDPR compliance now complicated further by the reach of AI, HR teams have to be more vigilant, decisive and dare we say, human in their reactions. Company leadership has always looked to HR to have their backs against the potential risks in employment. HR must lead the way.

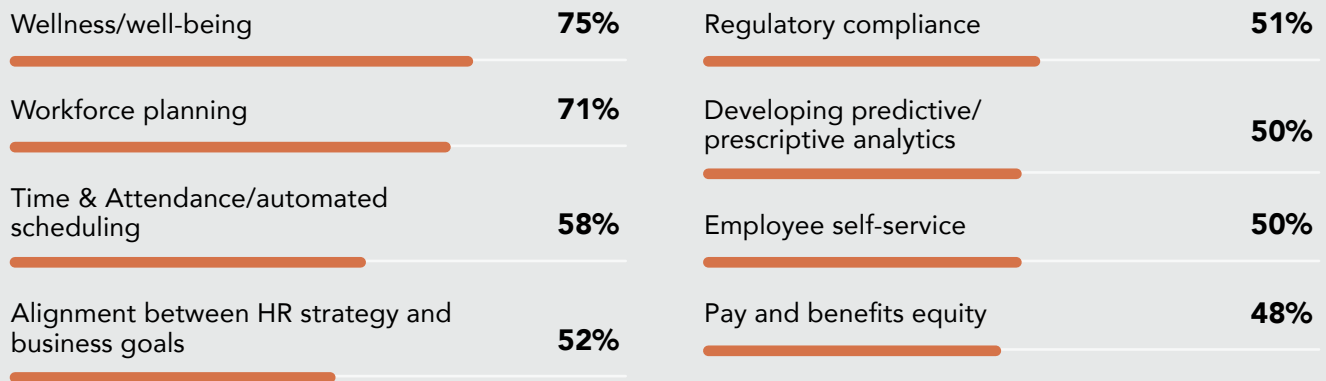
CONSEQUENCES

HR organizations that do not provide strong leadership in this environment will bring about catastrophic consequences in terms of workforce readiness, regulatory risk and talent availability.

Ensuring the workforce is supported and empowered within the uneven pace of change at work becomes job one. Helping workers grow their own capabilities in dealing with the emotional and mental strain of change is key. Companies that do not do this effectively will lose team members to competitors who do it better.

Being current and mindful of changes in regulatory issues that affect the employment relationship is crucial. Employment law fines are costly. Potential civil or criminal penalties arising from errors in enforcement or unfair treatment can shut down operations overnight — not to mention the risk of personal liability for managers found to have acted inappropriately.

Top Areas of Investment (Time and Money) in HR for 2024




Source: Brandon Hall Group Study, HCM Outlook 2024

*Percentages reflect organizations planning moderate or heavy investment in the areas listed.


Today’s workers vary in what is important to them and how, where and when they want to work. Companies that cannot reinvent their employment relationships and employee experiences will find it difficult to hire staff. HR teams should lead the way in bringing creative approaches to hiring and staffing to the table.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS


Here are critical questions companies should be answering related to Human Resources and the future of work:




How can we reskill and upskill our workforce to be prepared for jobs of the future that utilize emerging technologies like AI and automation?



What policies and processes need to be in place to ensure ethical and transparent implementation of AI that mitigates bias risks and potential job impacts?



How do we need to reimagine our culture, employee experience, and retention strategies to adapt to changing workplace dynamics including remote and hybrid work?



What investments do we need to make in career development programs, continuous learning pathways, and leadership training to build an agile, future-ready workforce?

BRANDON HALL GROUP POV

Here are five high-level strategies to address the HR challenges of today and tomorrow:

Leverage Data and Analytics to Drive Workforce Planning

Now is the time to leverage the power of data to understand and recommend what investment is needed in growing what skills. Build-or-buy is going to increasingly rely on a build approach because there won't be enough skills to buy. Predictive analytics can show impact to the broader business as skills requirements shift and what happens when the organization proactively closes the gaps.

Be Hyper-Vigilant with AI and Regulations

Leveraging what is already known, evaluate the use of AI, particularly in employment-related processes like hiring, compensation decisions, succession planning, etc. A regular audit process and clear governance policies and practices will go a long way toward keeping the company compliant. This will also make it easier when the time comes for meeting new requirements because it will be modifying existing practices, not inventing new ones.

Reinvent the Employee Experience

Apply Design Thinking approaches to the employee experience and look for high-impact, minimal-effort changes that can be made. Involve employees in the process. Evaluate the entire lifecycle from recruitment to resignation and gather employee perspectives on what would make work better. Then implement those changes and communicate them. Consider every aspect of employee life. Don't assume that employee engagement surveys provide all the answers to what employees want. Sometimes things like managing email and seamlessly managing basic transactions like scheduling time off, changing benefits, accessing pay and swapping shifts can make a big difference for employees, especially frontline workers who do the majority of work and historically have gotten less attention.

Mobilize Learning to Light the Way to the Future

Find ways to intentionally leverage existing learning infrastructure to support employee growth — from robust analysis and skills planning to building learning pathways that support upskilling and reskilling of existing staff. Technology-enabled, self-directed and practice-focused development programs give employees control over their future. This is also an opportunity to test the waters with an internal gig economy by leveraging talent marketplaces to pull in team members who are building new skills to deliver time- or project-limited tasks beyond their primary responsibilities.

Optimize Your Employee Value Proposition (EVP)

EVP has long been a useful tool in guiding planning and decision-making for HR teams. Now it is your brand promise to employees and potential employees. Today's workers are looking for a company that genuinely wants them for more than just their productivity. Companies that can best articulate — then deliver — the promise of belonging and inclusion and well-being, as well as a competitive wage and salary offering, will win the war for talent. You can pay well, but if your culture isn't positive, younger workers, in particular, won't stay.



PREDICTIONS

More CIOs will become CHROs

For most enterprise organizations, regardless of industry, technology is a great enabler and differentiator. The role of the CIO in successfully evaluating, building and maintaining an effective technology environment requires critical skills. Those skills, which extend far beyond technical expertise, are key to leading a team of internal experts to serve the needs of the business to deliver results. Given that technology has also become a key driver of the HR process, chief HR officers must have deep technical knowledge. The rise of AI-enabled technology and its associated employment implications are giving rise to complex issues never faced by companies before. The role of technology within HR is only going to continue to accelerate. For those reasons, leaders with strong technology backgrounds will need to become key people leaders.

HR Will Be Data-Driven and Employee-Centric

Whereas the HR space has long allowed for the growth of business partners/generalists and managers who were either great with people or good with numbers, practitioners will have to be capable at both going forward. For most organizations, this will mean a push to build the data capabilities. In all companies, the ability to fully understand the data and temper the analytical outcomes through the lens of the employee experience will need to become second nature. HR teams that can't elevate their ability to be data-driven will find themselves irrelevant.

Well-Being Will Become the Great Differentiator in Employer Branding

What began as a smart way to navigate the turmoil of the global pandemic has evolved into a required strategy for driving employee engagement and retention. As work continues to evolve and change, those companies that are better at supporting their employees through that transition will fare better in an escalating war for talent. The demand for agency, or control over work-life dynamics, is certainly nothing new. But it's become the defining characteristic of the modern employee experience. Enabling employees to do work that matters to the company in a fashion that supports their lifestyle of choice is the challenge now set before every employer.

HR will Become Early Adopters of Evolving AI Technology

OK, this may be more of a wish than a prediction. But HR can't take a wait-and-see approach to the evolution of work. Automating employment processes creates risk. HR needs to shape the direction of AI-driven workflows and contextualize those decisions within all aspects of the employment relationship, including employee experience, employee relations and compliance. Otherwise, external regulation will become increasingly invasive and HR will lose the opportunity to shape the company's response to the AI revolution.

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Kennie Wells

Deputy Director of Human Resources, City of Boca Raton

“In order to engage and retain our employees, we are working towards being more effective at educating and empowering them when it comes to their benefits. On too many occasions, we have come across tenured, valuable employees who were not aware of benefits they could have used to improve their health and personal wellbeing. Moving forward in the future, we want to implement a marketing approach and provide ongoing education to highlight the wide variety of benefits. This, in turn, will also help increase retention and overall improved employee experience.”



Adrience McCoy

SVP and Chief People Officer, Baptist Health South Florida

“The partnership between HR and IT is critical. HR must be very involved in technology sourcing for anything that supports the employee experience, learning or engagement. In fact, HR should source those vendors first because we are the content experts. Then bring options to the IT team to vet.”



Roger Carrillo

**SVP Global Talent, Learning and Organization Effectiveness Lead,
Mondelez International**

“2024 will bring an incredible level of complexity to our function. Upskill or die; collectively we would need to accelerate our ability to build unique skills and capabilities to be able to create new business propositions to our highly vigilant and demanding consumers, while monitoring the macro-pressures.”

ABOUT US

With more than 10,000 clients globally and 30 years of delivering world-class research and advisory services, Brandon Hall Group is focused on developing research that drives performance in emerging and large organizations, and provides strategic insights for executives and practitioners responsible for growth and business results.



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CONTRIBUTORS



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Brandon Hall Group CEO and Principal HCM Analyst Mike Cooke has more than 20 years' experience in human capital management and the research, software and technology industries. Before running Brandon Hall Group, Mike was co-founder of AC Growth, a research and consulting firm, and VP and General Manager of Field Operations at Bersin & Associates, a global analyst and consulting services firm in all areas of HCM.



Rachel Cooke



Brandon Hall Group Chief Operating Officer and Principal HCM Analyst Rachel Cooke is responsible for business operations, including client and member advisory services, marketing design, annual awards programs, conferences and the company's project management functions. She also leads Advancing Women in the Workplace and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, research and events. Rachel worked in the HCM research industry for 15+ years and held several key management and executive positions within the Talent and Learning Research, and Performance Improvement industries.



Michael Rochelle



Brandon Hall Group Chief Strategy Officer and Principal HCM Analyst Michael Rochelle leads a wide range of advisory support and strategic engagements for Fortune 1000 and small- to medium-sized organizations as well as leading and emerging solution providers across the HCM industry. Michael has more than 30 years' experience in HR, IT, sales, marketing, business development, and strategic and financial planning in Fortune 500 and venture-backed start-up organizations.



Claude Werder



Brandon Hall Group Senior Vice President and Principal HCM Analyst Claude Werder contributed to this book. He leads the Talent Management research and advisory practices, specializing in leadership development, performance development, learning, career development, employee engagement, succession management, talent retention, and diversity, equity and inclusion. He also produces Brandon Hall Group's HCM Excellence Conference.



Matt Pittman



Brandon Hall Group Principal Analyst Matt Pittman brings nearly 30 years of experience developing people and teams in a variety of settings and organizations. As an HR Practitioner, he has sat in nearly every HR seat. A significant part of those roles involved building out functions in organizations and driving large-scale change efforts. Matt leverages this in-depth experience and expertise to provide clients and providers with breakthrough insights and ideas to drive their business forward.



Melissa Benavides



Brandon Hall Group Director of Operations Melissa Benavides has extensive experience in marketing, strategy, graphic design, event management, team leadership and operations.



Geraldine Fajardo



Brandon Hall Group Graphic Designer Geraldine Fajardo created the graphics and layout for this book. She has extensive experience in advertising, graphic design, branding and photography. She creates the designs of the company's certifications, social media, presentations and more.

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Training Orchestra's award-winning Training Management Software is a scheduling system to automate and simplify Instructor-Led (ILT), Virtual Instructor-Led Training (vILT) and hybrid training operations: session scheduling, resource management, instructor calendars and collaboration, cost tracking, and reporting. As a complement to your LMS and other learning technologies, Training Orchestra can replace all spreadsheets and manual tasks to help L&D, extended enterprise, training companies, and associations to increase resource use, optimize session scheduling, and track and control costs in real-time. Organizations gain control over their training operations so they can, "Train More with Less!"


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Learning is both social and deeply personal in nature. Strategic capabilities — the ones that truly set an organization apart — must be learned together and acquired through experience.

Built upon the neurological science of learning, NovoEd is a people-centric software platform that combines social and collaborative features to drive performance readiness at scale. Through cohort-based experiences centered around human interaction, NovoEd taps into collective wisdom, placing each learner at the center of perspective, application, and expertise.

Large enterprises such as 3M, Marriott International, GE, Baker Hughes, and Nestlé use NovoEd to accelerate their critical initiatives, reconnect teams, and achieve rapid alignment through transformational learning.

NovoEd enables organizations to:

- Deliver streamlined, cohesive learning experiences across the organization — wherever learners are
- Enable feedback, team-based learning, structured peer learning, and mentorship
- Provide learners with immediate, real-world application in the course of their day-to-day work
- Measure and demonstrate business impact and learning outcomes with meaningful data
- Bring learning sources together into a cohesive experience that spans different modalities
- Scale learning with no-code authoring, robust integrations, automated nudges, progress tracking, and the ability to make mass updates to content

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SurePeople is a technology innovator dedicated to unlocking human potential. The Company's patented software platform integrates people science, powered by its Prism psychometric algorithm, with the latest advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). SurePeople's award-winning solutions empower leaders to align and optimize their teams by elevating emotional acumen, relationship dynamics, and team synergy. SurePeople has been recognized for innovation and impact by leading research and analyst firms such as Brandon Hall Group, Deloitte Consulting, and Training Industry.

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Docebo is the world's most powerful learning platform. Since 2005, we've been on a mission to transform the way organizations think about learning. Unlike a traditional LMS, Docebo does more than just deliver training. We're here to help leaders unlock the power of learning, turning it into a driving force for productivity, engagement, and success—for your learners and your business. Our AI-powered learning platform and industry-leading support and services help organizations create and manage content, effectively train diverse audiences, and measure the impact of their learning programs. We do this with our powerful yet user-friendly tools, customizable solutions, and extensive integrations. So far, we've helped more than 3,500 companies deliver hyper-personalized learning experiences and seamlessly scale into new audiences and use cases. As the industry leader in innovation and AI, Docebo helps you make learning a competitive advantage. We're the foundation on which the future of learning is built—and the future is bright.

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EPAM Systems is a leading digital transformation services firm focused on helping the world's best companies thrive in a dynamic, technology-driven future. In addition to deep expertise in technology, data, and strategy consulting, we are also a mature skills-based organization. Over the past two decades, we created our own AI-enabled, skills-based talent intelligence platform and use skills at every stage of the employee journey and beyond to create an engaged workforce with the right skills and ensure our agility and responsiveness as a business.

Our Talent Enablement & Transformation advisory practice helps companies realize business objectives by developing employees' data and technical knowledge, mindset, and ways of working, and by supporting the shift to become a skills-based organization. We also offer content development and workforce experience transformation services.

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Explorance empowers organizations with next-generation feedback analytics to accelerate the insight-to-action cycle, encouraging the philosophy of “Feedback for the brave” to drive purpose, impact, and growth. Bringing 20 years of expertise, Explorance, a member of the World Economic Forum and a trusted partner for 35% of Fortune 100 companies and 25% of the world’s top higher education institutions, has influenced over 25 million individuals with award-winning solutions like Blue, Metrics That Matter, and MLY. Consistently ranked among the top employers by the Great Places to Work Institute®, Explorance, a Brandon Hall AI award winner, is also a two-time Global Leader in the 360-degree feedback market by Fortune Business Insights.

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Infopro Learning is an award-winning workforce transformation company that unlocks the potential of employees, clients, and partners. Unlocking potential unleashes higher performance levels, resulting in outcomes aligned with your company’s strategic objectives. Infopro Learning helps you grow, manage change effectively, and ultimately – transform.

Over the last 25 years, Infopro Learning has built services and solutions around training, upskilling, and developing people. As a global leader in talent development and managed learning services, Infopro Learning offers full-service solutions that support the entire lifecycle of learning, including strategy, curriculum design, content development, training delivery, learning administration, and talent sourcing. Our digital platforms and global infrastructure enable the accelerated realization of the outcomes associated with full-service solutions.

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Skillable is the trusted pioneer and innovator in hands-on learning and skill validation. In job and organization-tailored scenarios, people develop and validate their skills through live learning experiences that accelerate job readiness and produce performance-based skill data and intelligence. Since 2004, more than 400 global customers have created and launched 35 million labs, using Skillable to practice and validate their skills.

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CYPHER Learning is leading the necessary disruption of learning platforms to unleash human potential. The company combines Learning Management System (LMS), Learning Experience Platform (LXP), and content development into one platform, streamlining efficiency for businesses and academia. Using controlled generative AI, CYPHER reduces administrative tasks and accelerates time from content ideation to delivery for trainers, educators and L&D professionals. Industry analysts say CYPHER is the “best Gen-AI content creator” and is a “supercharged technology platform that rocks skills-based learning.” Millions of people worldwide experience their “just in time, just for me, just the way I want it” approach in 50+ languages.


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At TrainingPros, we know that you want to be successful. In order to do that, you need the right L&D consultant. The problem is you don't have enough time to find the right consultant which makes you feel stressed. When you have more projects than people, we can provide you with the right L&D consultant to start your project with confidence.

We believe the process should be easier. As L&D professionals, we understand how long it takes to find the right consultant, which is why we have helped scores of large companies find the consultants to successfully complete their projects.

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So, schedule a consultation today so you can quit spending your budget on unqualified consultants and instead complete your projects successfully!


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Our holistic, people-centered approach to strategy activation paired with our deep technical expertise enables us to realize greater potential of people through growth, transformation, and the entire employee experience. We consult, design, and build solutions that are custom crafted to your organization's strategy and culture. Whether you need to implement enterprise learning and talent platforms, deliver high-volume training, or drive transformation, we integrate an understanding of how people learn with research-based best practices to develop creative, engaging, and effective learning and performance solutions.

Our services include but are not limited to:

- Talent Development
- Client Experience
- Skills Strategy
- Employee Experience
- Digital Transformation
- Enterprise Learning Platform Implementation
- Growth
- Leadership Development
- Onboarding
- Product Launch
- Skills Strategy
- Strategic Change
- Systems Adoption
- Ways of Working

Strategy activation is hard work. When done right, it's approached holistically so your results are holistic and sustainable. That's why we collaborate across disciplines to custom-craft your solution. We'll create exactly the right mix of talent and expertise to deliver the solution you need, on time, and on budget. Better yet, we do it with an energy and passion we think you'll enjoy.


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TTA is the largest provider of on-demand learning and development professional talent. We assist organizations of all sizes and industries by providing cost-effective, high-quality talent that aligns with their unique training needs—regardless of the scale, approach, or location. With TTA you have access to handpicked, top-tier L&D experts, ready to hit the ground running to seamlessly assist with your training initiatives. Our scalable talent bench quickly become an extension of your team, bridging skill gaps and allowing you to continue to focus on your core business.


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The Regis Company's no-code solution, SimGate™, redefines experiential learning. Our platform delivers cutting-edge technology with user-friendly design. We help organizations deliver best-in-class experiential learning programs by leveraging AI to create high-quality, measurable learning experiences, cheaper and faster than ever before. With SimGate™, learning designers can easily create new, highly-contextualized learning experiences with a few simple prompts, cutting simulation design and development costs by 90%. For organizations aiming to expand their simulation capabilities and gain valuable insights into their workforce, SimGate presents an adaptable and cost-effective solution. Our platform empowers Learning & Development leaders to create immersive, AI-powered simulations, and our technology reflects the core belief that learning should be both engaging and effective. We believe the best learning experiences are those that fully resonate with learners—so they not only know; they also do. SimGate™ embodies this philosophy, transforming complex learning concepts into accessible, relatable, and engaging modules. Step into the future of experiential learning simulation design with Regis' SimGate™ Studio.


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Schoox is workplace learning software with a people-first twist. People aren't cogs, and Schoox was designed for how humans actually learn. We strive to help global organizations empower their people to become more confident, capable, and enthusiastic about bringing their best selves to work.

We keep learners curious by letting you deliver more kinds of content wherever they are, from the front line to the corporate office. And by making learning easy, accessible, rewarding, and fun, we help you get everyone more excited about their career development. Learners can "up" their skills, grow on the job, and get more done—and you can measure the impact of their awesome accomplishments.

Schoox powers people-focused learning experiences for organizations around the world, including Subway, Celebrity Cruises, Phillips 66, and Sonesta Hotels.


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Disprz offers an AI-powered enterprise Learning Experience Platform that helps align your enterprise learning and skilling programs with business outcomes. Be it a knowledge or frontline workforce, Disprz skill stack helps in building a steady pipeline of capable, skilled employees ready to be productive now and in the future. Disprz helps organizations identify and benchmark themselves against trending skills required in their industry, create impactful skilling pathways for bridging skill gaps, and drive digital skilling adoption to facilitate capability building. Our mission is to “enable every person to advance at work and life, through the best technology-led, scientifically-backed skilling experiences”

With a global presence spanning every continent, we are proud to have a diverse team of over 300 rockstars and a growing customer base of 350+. Our reach extends far and wide, impacting the lives of over 3 million learners worldwide.

Our solutions include:

- LMS: Drive engaging learning & development experiences with a feature-rich enterprise learning management system.
- Learning Experience Platform: AI-based personalized and intuitive learning experiences backed by an ever-growing content repository.
- Frontline training & enablement: Drive business outcomes by introducing engaging learning experiences for your distributed workforce.


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DX is a fast-growing human performance consultancy with deep experience in culture activation and leadership development. We have extensive success and impact in the areas of developing higher-performing teams, building a culture of psychological safety, and leadership self-awareness.

Our purpose is to bring CARE to the workplace and help our clients win. CARE stands for Clarity, Autonomy, Relationships, and Equity®, the four leadership habits that inspire higher performance. We developed this intellectual property based on our extensive research and practice in the field of human capital.

CARE helps organizations, leaders, and teams address the performance challenges they face by meeting the brain's basic needs. We collaborate with clients from Fortune 500s to fast-growing companies, across various industries and geographies, to find out where higher performance is being left on the table and help them fix it, in most cases having an immediate impact.

CARE is not another model, but a playbook for higher performance that can be customized to enhance what already exists when it comes to your values, leadership principles, and surveys/assessments. Our job is to become an extension of your team to help you solve the most important people issues you face.

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Hult EF Corporate Education creates the world's change-makers by transforming the way they communicate, perform, and lead. We offer language and communication, coaching, and leadership development programs to businesses and governments globally. We believe these core human skills are key to releasing our capacity to change the world for the better. Our practical, experiential, and immersive approach to learning is what makes lasting change possible.

We do this by bringing together expertise from three leading global education organizations: EF Education First, the world's leading private education company; Hult International Business School, the internationally acclaimed and triple-accredited business school; and The Ashridge Centre for Executive Coaching (ACC), the internationally recognised innovator and standards provider for the coaching profession.

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Thought Industries powers the business of learning with the industry's leading enterprise learning platform for customer, partner and professional training. The company was founded in 2013 around the core belief that online learning experiences should be modern, intuitive, engaging, and scalable. Today, the Thought Industries growing team builds and maintains the only learning platform with completely native tools and integrations that drive higher customer engagement, learner proficiency, and retention. Headquartered in Boston, Thought Industries has offices across North America and Europe.

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