HRKatha
HUMAN RESOURCE SIMPLIFIED

Hero Vired

SURVEY REPORT

Upskilling and Reskilling for Jobs of the Future

The survey

Upskilling and reskilling are no longer just nice-to-have propositions at the workplace. They are now must-haves. Business requires new talent and new skills to survive and thrive. While companies look for ready talent outside – which is becoming increasingly hard to attract and retain – they also realise that upskilling and reskilling are the only ways to sustain the internal talent, and make them resourceful for the business.

HRKatha, in association with Hero Vired, conducted a survey among HR and learning professionals to gauge and formulate the trends in business across sectors.

As many as 119 HR professionals participated in this survey, of which 53 per cent were senior managers and function heads, while 36 per cent held mid-management roles and around 11 per cent were CXOs.

Of the respondents, 28 per cent each were from IT & ITES and manufacturing companies, 7 per cent from the BFSI sector, and 6 per cent represented the healthcare sector. The share of respondents from hospitality and retail sectors were 5 per cent each, while 2 per cent belonged to the logistics sector. The remaining 21 per cent of respondents were from other sectors such as aviation, telecom, media and consultancy. **H**
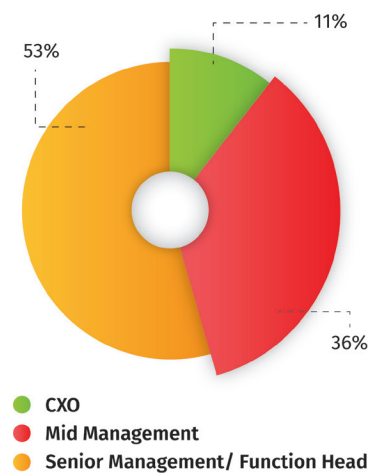
HIERARCHY LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

- CXO
- Mid Management
- Senior Management/ Function Head

Figure 1: Hierarchy

RESPONDENTS ACROSS SECTORS

- IT/ ITES
- BFSI
- Hospitality
- Logistics
- Manufacturing
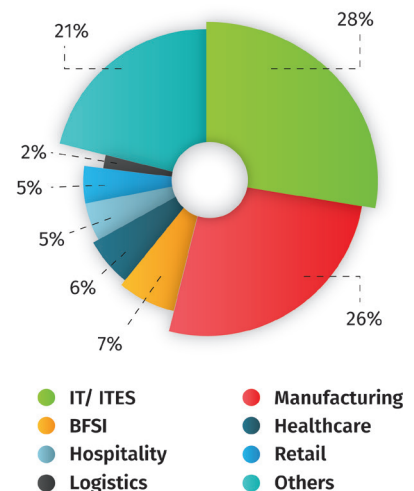- Healthcare
- Retail
- Others

Figure 2: Sectors

Focus of L&D programmes

The key focus of any L&D programme is 'Upskilling for business growth', and about 77 per cent respondents consider it a top priority, while 18 per cent say it is important. Interestingly, 4 per cent said it was not at all important, while the remaining 1 per cent was indecisive.

The next focus area of L&D programmes is 'Upgrading technical skills,' with 70 per cent of the respondents calling it a top priority and 26 per cent also saying it was important.

The survey reveals that 'Overall professional growth of employees' is an important focus area of L&D programmes but not a top priority. While 52 per cent of the respondents call it a top priority, 33 per cent are of the opinion that it is important.

When it comes to 'Leadership development', the opinion seems to be somewhat divided – 45 per cent say it is a top priority and 50 per cent say it is important.

'Learning for recently-onboarded employees' and 'Employee engagement' are other important aspects of an L&D programme but appear low on the priority list. Just about 57 per cent of the respondents put 'Learning for recently on-boarded employees' on top of the agenda for an L&D programme, while only 30 per cent consider 'Employee engagement' as the top focus area of L&D programmes. Around 55 per cent of the respondents said employee engagement was important, but 13 per cent said it was not at all an important outcome of L&D programmes.

KEY FOCUS AREA FOR L&D PROGRAMMES

Top Priority · Important
Not at all important · Can't say

Figure 3: Agenda

According to senior management and functional heads, the top agenda for L&D programmes were – 'Upskilling for business growth' and 'Upgrading technical skills'. Next in line were 'Learning for recently- onboarded employees' and 'Overall professional growth of employees' in terms of priority. At the bottom of the priority list for this group of respondents were 'Leadership development' and 'Employee engagement'.

For mid-management professionals, the top agenda of L&D programmes was 'Upskilling for business growth' followed by 'Overall professional growth of employees'. H
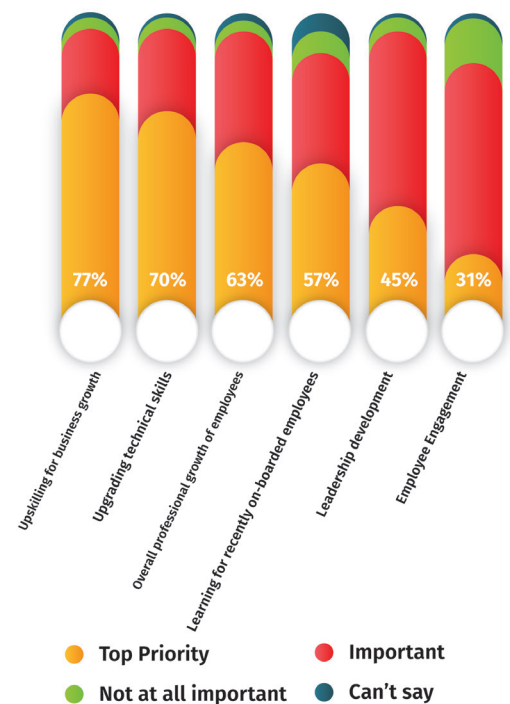
Key drivers of L&D programmes

L&D programmes in any organisation are driven by two core agendas — 'general business agenda' and 'individual learning needs'. The survey reveals that the skew is totally towards 'general business agenda', because that is in the larger interest. Around 68 per cent of the respondents opined that 'general business agenda' was what their learning programmes were mostly based on. The remaining 32 per cent said the primary agenda of their learning programmes was 'individual learning needs'.

Individual learning needs as key driver of L&D programmes is mostly favoured in manufacturing and IT & ITES sectors. The picture is quite in contrast to other sectors such as retail, logistics, hospitality or healthcare, where 'general business agenda' takes precedence while organising L&D programmes. **H**

WHAT DRIVES THE LEARNING PROGRAMME ACROSS SECTORS

Sector	Individual learning needs	General Business Agenda
LOGISTICS		100%
HEALTHCARE	14%	86%
HOSPITALITY	17%	83%
RETAIL	17%	83%
BFSI	22%	78%
IT/ITES	33%	67%
OTHERS	36%	64%
MANUFACTURING	39%	61%

● **Individual learning needs**
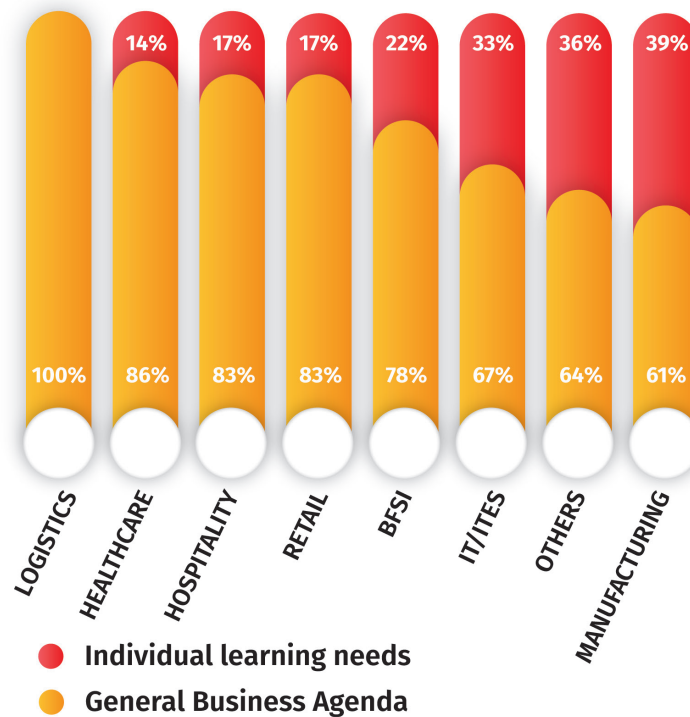● **General Business Agenda**

Figure 4: Business Agenda Vs Individual Needs

Learning requirement across functions

The learning requirement is never the same across functions. It may depend on the nature of business and may be prioritised as per business needs and strategic decisions.

Technology

In the last two years, technology has emerged as a deciding factor across businesses and sectors, with companies queuing up for digitisation and automation. This was evident from the survey, as 71 per cent of the respondents from across sectors named the technology function as a top priority in terms of learning requirement. Another 22 per cent considered it as important.

Technology professionals leading the priority list for learning requirement was most visible in the IT & ITES companies as 91 per cent respondents thought it was top priority and the remaining 9 per cent called it important.

In the manufacturing sector, the requirement of learning and upskilling for technology professionals was less vis-à-vis the IT sector as only 74 per cent considered technology as top priority, although, about 23 per cent said training and upskilling was important but not a top priority, and around 3 per cent of the respondents from the smaller manufacturing companies said learning for the technology function was not at all important.

Customer Service

Next in line of importance in terms of learning requirement was the customer service function, with 61 per cent of the respondents considering it as a top priority. About 32 per cent said it wasn't top priority but learning for customer service function was definitely an important agenda.

Learning and development for the customer service department isn't a top priority for the manufacturing and IT companies – only 54 per cent considered it a top priority. Same goes with healthcare and retail.

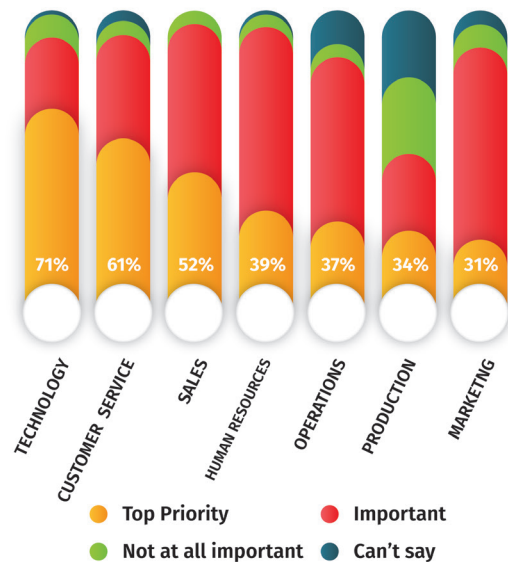**PRIORITY OF TRAINING REQUIREMENT AS PER DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS**

71% TECHNOLOGY
61% CUSTOMER SERVICE
52% SALES
39% HUMAN RESOURCES
37% OPERATIONS
34% PRODUCTION
31% MARKETING

- 🟠 Top Priority
- 🔴 Important
- 🟢 Not at all important
- 🔵 Can't say

Figure 5: Importance of functions

RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS WHO SAY LEARNING REQUIREMENT FOR TECH IS A TOP PRIORITY

91% | 78% | 74% | 71% | 52% | 50% | 50% | 38%

- 🟢 IT/ ITES
- 🔴 BFSI
- 🟠 Manufacturing
- 🔵 Healthcare
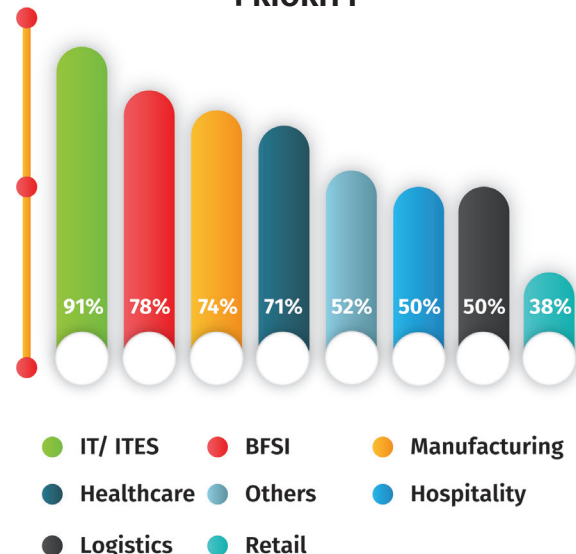- 🔵 Others
- 🔵 Hospitality
- ⚫ Logistics
- 🟢 Retail

Figure 6: Technology

Learning requirement across functions

However, for sectors such as BFSI and hospitality, learning requirement for the customer service department was on top of the agenda, with around 90 per cent respondents from these two sectors considering this function a top priority for all L&D programmes.

Sales
Third in order of importance for training requirement was the sales function. About 52 per cent of respondents said it was a top priority for their business. Another 44 per cent said learning requirement for the sales function was important.

Around 40-50 per cent of the respondents from most sectors said training and upskilling for sales professionals in their teams was a top priority. However, it is clearly not a top priority in the hospitality sector, as over 80 per cent of the respondents from the sector said it was important but not a top priority, and a significant 20 per cent said it was not at all important.

Human Resources
Only 39 per cent of respondents said L&D programmes for the HR function were a top priority, while 55 per cent said it was important but not a top priority. Around 4 per cent said it was not at all important! Training for the HR function is a top priority for over 40 per cent respondents from the manufacturing and IT & ITES sectors. It is a top priority for around 30 per cent respondents from the retail, healthcare and BFSI sectors. However, for respondents from the hospitality sector, it is important but not a top priority.

Marketing
Around 31 per cent of respondents put learning requirement for marketing as a top priority and 58 per cent thought it was important. At the same time, 7 per cent of the respondents also say it is not at all important. Training requirement for the marketing function topped the agenda for most media companies and advertising agencies.

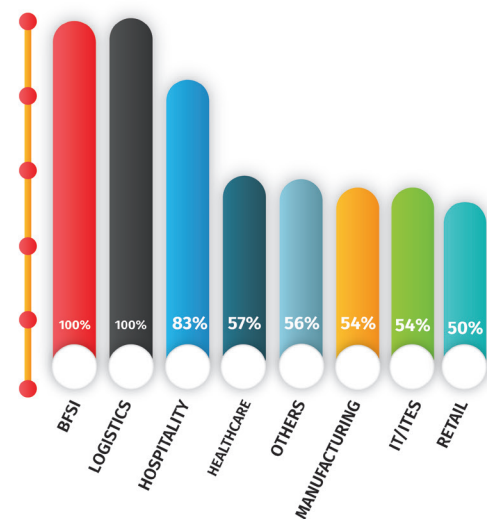**RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS WHO SAY LEARNING REQUIREMENT FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE IS A TOP PRIORITY**

BFSI 100%, LOGISTICS 100%, HOSPITALITY 83%, HEALTHCARE 57%, OTHERS 56%, MANUFACTURING 54%, IT/ITES 54%, RETAIL 50%

Figure 7: Customer service

RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS WHO SAY LEARNING REQUIREMENT FOR SALES IS A TOP PRIORITY

100%, 57%, 57%, 56%, 56%, 55%, 48%

- Logistics
- Retail
- Healthcare
- Others
- BFSI
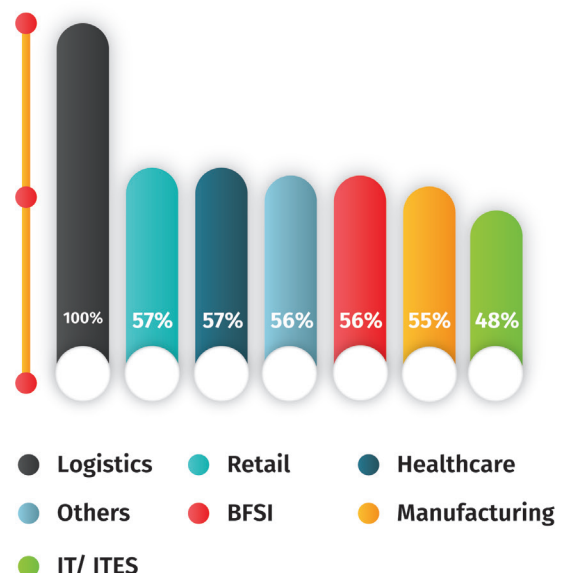- Manufacturing
- IT/ ITES

Figure 8: Sales

Learning requirement across functions

Operations

Operations figured low on the training priority list in most companies. Only 37 per cent of respondents from across sectors said it was a top priority for them. Training for the operations function was highly preferred for mostly manufacturing and services companies.

Production

Only 34 per cent said training and learning was a top priority for the production function, while 23 per cent said it was important. Another 23 per cent said it was not at all important. The popularity for training for this function was mostly high amongst the manufacturing and IT & ITES companies. H

RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS WHO SAY LEARNING REQUIREMENT FOR HR IS A TOP PRIORITY

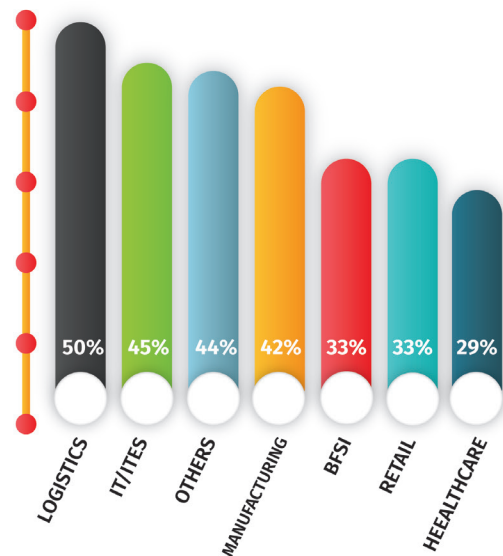| LOGISTICS	IT/ITES	OTHERS	MANUFACTURING	BFSI	RETAIL	HEEALTHCARE
50%	45%	44%	42%	33%	33%	29%

Figure 9: HR

RESPONDENTS FROM EACH SECTOR WHO SAY LEARNING REQUIREMENT OF MARKETING IS A TOP PRIORITY

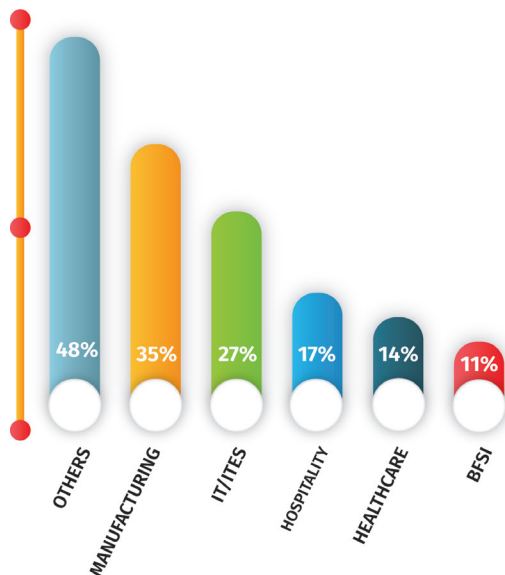| OTHERS	MANUFACTURING	IT/ITES	HOSPITALITY	HEALTHCARE	BFSI
48%	35%	27%	17%	14%	11%

Figure 10: Marketing

RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT SECTORS WHO SAY LEARNING REQUIREMENT FOR OPERATIONS IS A TOP PRIORITY

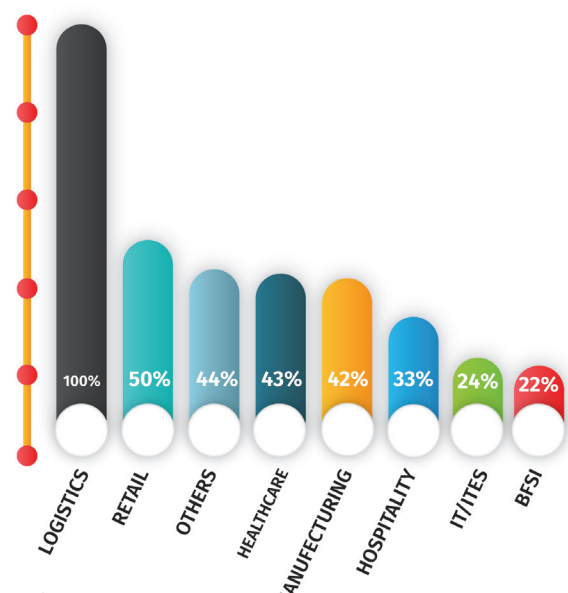| LOGISTICS	RETAIL	OTHERS	HEALTHCARE	MANUFACTURING	HOSPITALITY	IT/ITES	BFSI
100%	50%	44%	43%	42%	33%	24%	22%

Figure 11: Operations

Selecting learning partner

Choosing and finalising a learning partner is always tricky. There are several depending factors which influence the decision.

Comprehensiveness of the course

Selection of a learning partner depends on how comprehensive a course they can provide. Around 74 per cent of the respondents voted for course comprehensiveness as a top priority while selecting a learning partner, while about 24 per cent said it was important.

Around 80 per cent of senior management professionals and 76 per cent of CXOs believed this was the most important criterion for selecting a learning partner, while only 62 per cent of mid-management professionals felt so.

Comprehensiveness of the course was the most important deciding factor for the IT & ITES sector (90 per cent), followed by BFSI (88 per cent) and hospitality (83 per cent). It wasn't a top priority for the retail and logistics sectors.

Institution's legacy and brand value

Next important factor was the learning partner institution's legacy and brand value. Around 49 per cent gave it top priority while selecting, and 42 per cent said it was an important factor for selection. The importance given to legacy and brand value of the institution was highest in the logistics and hospitality sectors followed by IT & ITES and BFSI.

Around 50 per cent of senior management professionals voted for legacy and brand value of the learning partner as a deciding factor for selection, while only 46 per cent of CXOs and middle-level managers opted for the same.

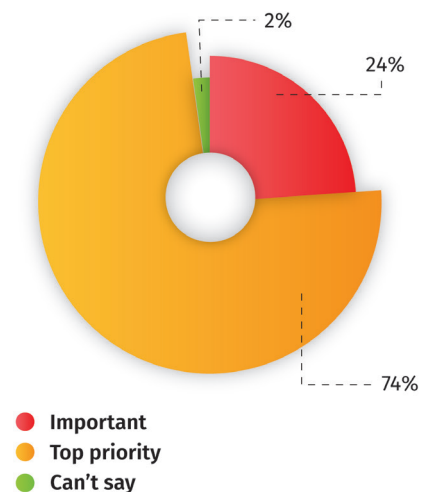**HOW COMPREHENSIVENESS OF THE COURSE INFLUENCE LEARNING PARTNER SELECTION**

- ● Important
- ● Top priority
- ● Can't say

Figure 12: Comprehensiveness of the course

HOW INSTITUTION'S LEGACY AND BRAND IMPACTS SELECTION OF LEARNING PARTNER

- ● Not at all important   ● Top priority
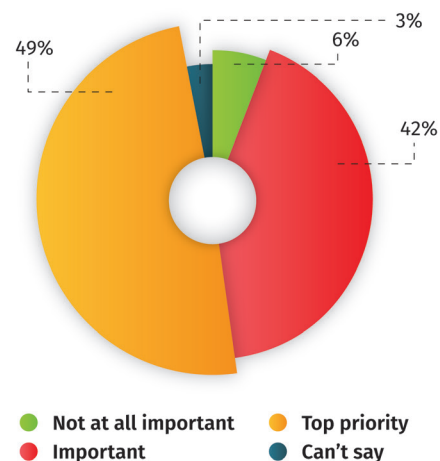- ● Important   ● Can't say

Figure 13: Partner institution's legacy & brand value

Selecting learning partner

In-person or instructor-led-training

In-person or instructor-led training was a factor, which 43 per cent of the respondents considered as a top priority while selecting a learning partner. Another 44 per cent said it was important but not a top priority.

Mid-management professionals were in favour of in-person or instructor-led training as 51 per cent of them called it a top priority. Among CXOs, the figure was 46 per cent, while for senior management professionals, the vote was only 36 per cent.

Certification

Certification offered by the learning partner is not a deciding factor. Only 18 per cent of respondents said it was a top priority and 14 per cent said it was not at all important. In fact, a majority of them — over 60 per cent —felt it was important but not a priority.

Most respondents who believed certification was important were from the IT sector — around 27 per cent said it was top priority.

The priority for certification was more prominent amongst mid-management professionals as 78 per cent voted in favour of it. About 23 per cent said it was top priority and 55 per cent said it was important. H

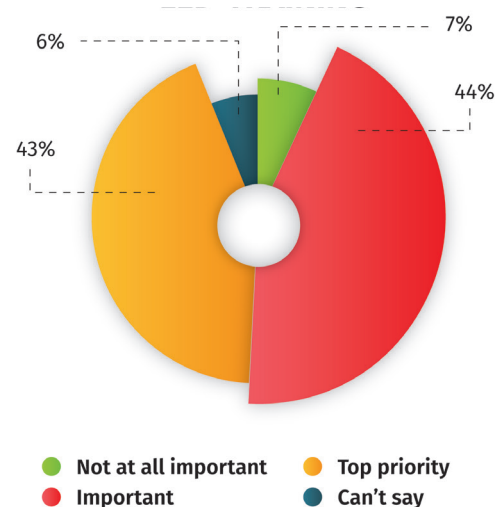**IMPACT OF IN-PERSON OR INSTRUCTOR-LED-TRAINING ON SELECTION OF LEARNING PARTNER**

- Not at all important
- Important
- Top priority
- Can't say

Figure 14: In-person/instructor-led-training

IMPACT OF CERTIFICATION ON SELECTION OF LEARNING PARTNER

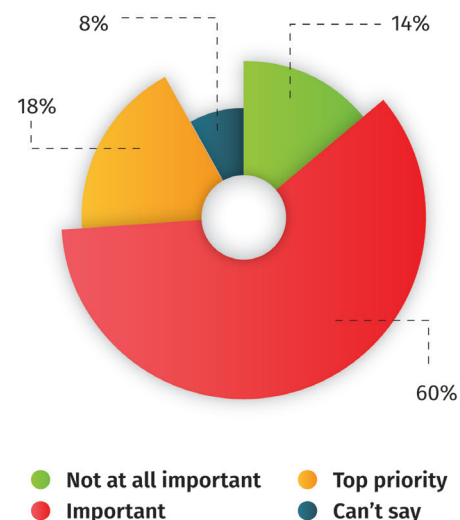- Not at all important
- Important
- Top priority
- Can't say

Figure 15: Certification

Enthusiasm to learn

As one moves up the corporate ladder, the keenness to learn decreases. Around 70 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that entry-level employees are more keen and proactive when it comes to learning, while only 22 per cent said they need to be pushed for learning.

About 53 per cent CXOs and 80 per cent senior-management professionals believe that entry-level employees are keen to learn.

About 55 per cent of the respondents feel mid-level managers are keen on learning, while only 34 per cent of respondents said the same for mid-senior level professionals. The numbers are even smaller for senior executives or CXOs, with only 30 per cent of the respondents opining that this segment is keen on learning.

Even among CXOs and senior-management professionals, only 30 per cent and 33 per cent, respectively, believed the senior executives or CXOs are keen on learning.

On the contrary, 37 per cent respondents felt that senior executives or CXOs need to be pushed for learning, and 29 per cent said this segment is disinterested. In fact, 61 per cent of CXOs and 63 per cent of senior managers believed that their contemporaries were totally disinterested in learning and needed to be pushed to join learning programmes.

Around 61 per cent respondents believed that mid-senior level employees needed to be pushed for learning and 3 per cent thought them to be disinterested. H

HOW KEEN ARE ENTRY-LEVEL EMPLOYEES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMMES

1%
7%
22%
70%

● Disinterested   ● Very keen & proactive
● Need to be pushed   ● Can't say

Figure 16: Entry level
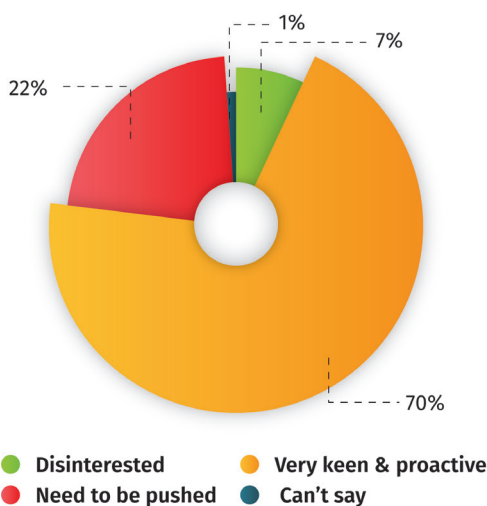
HOW KEEN ARE CXOS & SR. EXECUTIVES FOR LEARNING PROGRAMMES

4%
29%
30%
37%

● Disinterested   ● Very keen & proactive
● Need to be pushed   ● Can't say
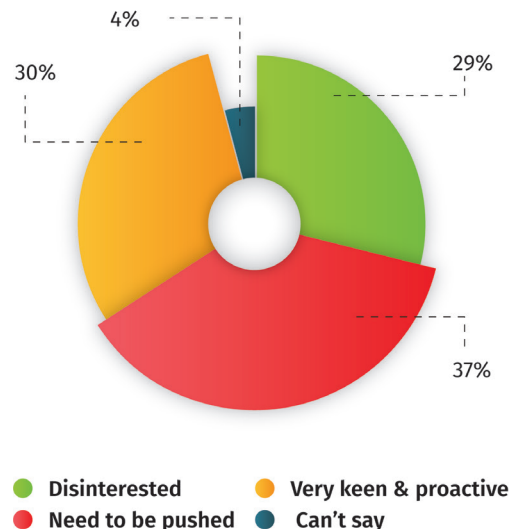
Figure 17: Senior Executive level/CXO

Requirement of learning

The requirement of learning is highest amongst entry- level and mid-level employees and around 68-69 per cent of respondents feel so. The corresponding figures for senior-level managers and CXOs range between 28 -14 per cent. A majority of respondents feel, learning for the senior management and CXOs is important but not a top priority. The number keeps decreasing as one moves up the ladder. For instance, 66 per cent of respondents believed learning programmes are important for senior management, while only 58 per cent felt the same for the CXOs. In fact, 22 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that learning is not at all important for CXOs.

Among CXOs, 30 per cent feel learning is a top priority for them and their counterparts; 38 percent believe it is important, and 23 per cent say it is not at all important.

A whopping 83 per cent of senior management professionals feel learning programmes should be a top priority or matter of importance for the CXO community. Similarly, 92 per cent CXOs believe that learning should be a top priority or very important for the senior managers. H
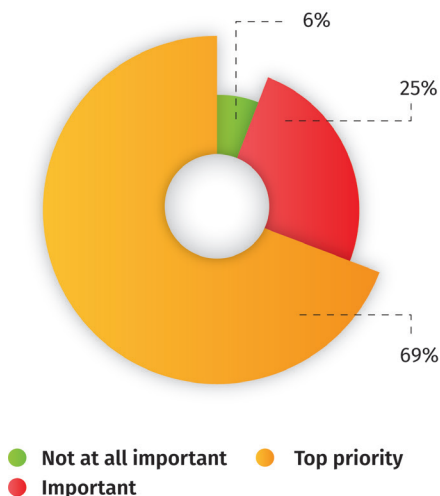
CXOS WHO BELIEVE SR. MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS NEED LEARNING INTERVENTION

92%

Figure 19: CXOs who believe Sr. management professionals need learning intervention

REQUIREMENT OF LEARNING FOR ENTRY AND MID-LEVEL EXECUTIVES

6%
25%
69%

● Not at all important   ● Top priority
● Important

Figure 18: Entry & Mid-Level

SR. MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS WHO BELIEVE CXOS NEED LEARNING INTERVENTION
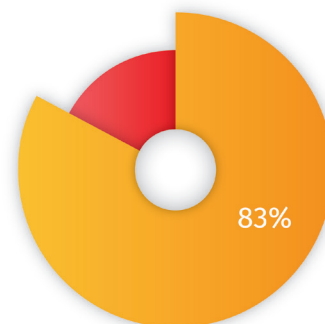
83%

Figure 20: Sr. management professionals who believe CXOs need learning intervention

Generosity in budget allocation by CEO & top management

It is important to understand the bottleneck when it comes to learning programme initiation. Though 44 per cent of the respondents opine that their CEOs or top management are very encouraging and generous while allocating a learning budget, 34 per cent say that their CEO or the board is excited about the learning programme but not so generous when it comes to allocating a budget. The remaining 22 per cent opine that their CEOs or boards are moderate in approach while planning, designing or allocating learning budget.

In comparison to manufacturing and IT & ITES, the respondents from the BFSI and retail sectors are more positive about the board or CEO's approach to the learning budget. Around 66 per cent of the respondents said that their CEOs were very encouraging and generous while allocating a learning budget, as opposed to 48 per cent in IT and 38 per cent in manufacturing companies.

HOW GENEROUS ARE CEOs

22%   44%

34%

- Very encouraging & generous
- Excited about the learning programmes, but not so generous while allocating budget
- Moderate in approach while planning, designing or allocating learning budget

Figure 21: CEO's reaction to learning programmes

Around 29 per cent of the respondents in manufacturing also said that their CEOs were moderate in approach while planning, designing or allocating learning budget and another 32 per cent said that their CEOs were excited about the learning programmes, but not so generous while allocating budget. **H**

Co-creating programmes with learning partners

Around 42 per cent respondents seem to be co-creating the programmes with their learning partners almost every time, which mean a higher involvement in designing a learning programme. About 48 per cent say they do it only sometimes. Only 10 per cent admit to minimal involvement as they rarely co-create programmes with their learning partners.

From some sectors, such as BFSI, hospitality and retail, cent percent respondents said they always or often co-create learning programmes with their learning partners. Only 10-13 per cent respondents from sectors such as manufacturing, IT and retail said that they rarely get involved. **H**
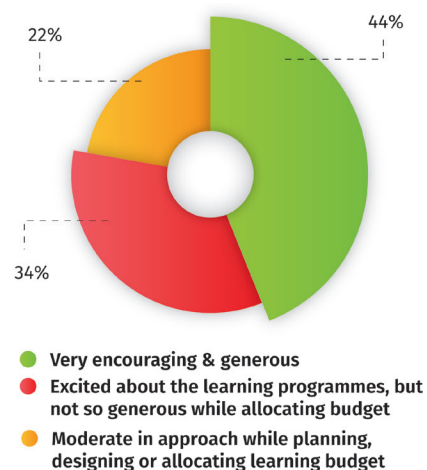
INVOLVEMENT IN CREATING A LEARNING PROGRAMME

10%   48%

42%
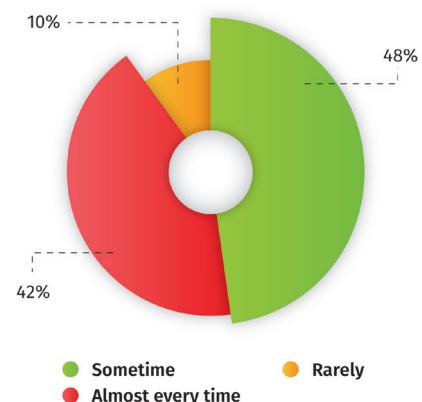
- Sometime
- Rarely
- Almost every time

Figure 22: Frequency of co-creating learning programmes

Training for technology & soft skills

It is evident that technology training is topmost on the priority list for most businesses and companies across sectors. However, technology is huge and there are interests around specific areas of technology that are capturing people's attention.

Topping the list are artificial intelligence and data science with 74 per cent votes each, followed by machine learning, with 72 per cent respondents calling it a crucial technology. Next in terms of popularity is full-stack development and financial technologies with 61 per cent and 51 per cent voting for them, respectively. At the bottom of the preference list were game design, 3D structural modelling tools and visual programming tools with 48, 33 and 17 per cent opting for them, respectively.

Apart from technology upskilling, technology training is also a must. In order of preference, 87 per cent emphasise on communication followed by interpersonal skills chosen by 82 per cent respondents.

Analytical & problem-solving skills, conflict resolution, and cross-functional collaboration were next on the list – preferred by 68-66 per cent respondents. At the bottom of the list are soft skills, such as adaptability, emotional intelligence, and resilience & adaptability. H
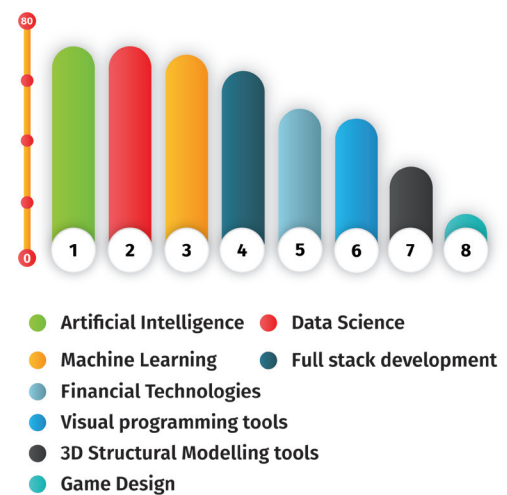
TECHNOLOGY TRAINING THAT NEEDS ATTENTION

- Artificial Intelligence
- Data Science
- Machine Learning
- Full stack development
- Financial Technologies
- Visual programming tools
- 3D Structural Modelling tools
- Game Design

Figure 23: Training for technology

SOFT SKILLS THAT NEEDS ATTENTION

- Communication
- Interpersonal Skills
- Analytical & Problem Solving Skills
- Conflict Resolution
- Personal Effectiveness
- Cross-functional collaboration
- Adaptability
- Technology skills/digital fluency
- Emotional intelligence
- Resilience & adaptability

Figure 24: Soft skills training

Factors that discourage participation in learning sessions

They say you can get the horse to the water but not make it drink. Same goes with learning. There are several factors that discourage people from attending learning sessions.
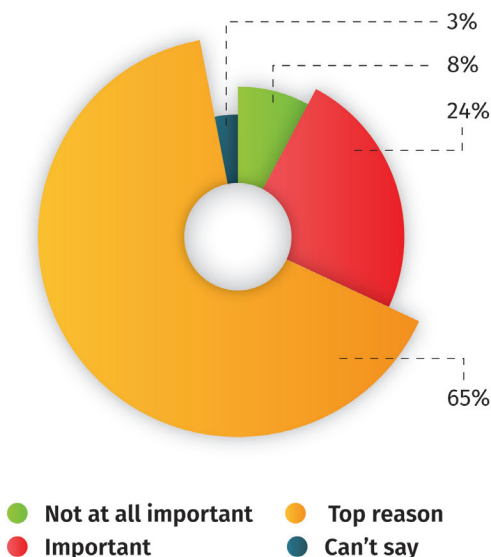
Lack of uniqueness of content tops the list of deterrents, with 65 per cent saying it's a no.1 deterrent and another 24 per cent consider it an important reason for people excusing themselves from learning sessions.

Around 93 per cent of senior management professionals agree that if content is not unique, participation is less. About 71 per cent say it is the primary reason and 22 per cent say it is an important reason. Among CXOs, 69 per cent say it is a crucial or important factor, while 23 per cent say it is not such an important factor for dissuasion.

Personal disconnect is the next common reason for people to stay away from joining a learning session – around 33 per cent call it a primary reason and 24 per cent say it is an important reason. While 38 per cent CXOs don't agree to this, but 46 per cent say it is an important and a crucial factor. Interestingly, the senior management professionals differ on this, with 46 per cent of the opinion that this is not an important reason.

Respondents were also asked if people were disinterested in learning sessions due to time constraints. Around 36 per cent disagreed and 26 per cent agreed that this was a big reason. Around 32 per cent also said it could be an important reason behind people shying away from learning sessions. **H**

HOW LACK OF UNIQUENESS OF CONTENT DISSUADES PEOPLE

- 3%
- 8%
- 24%
- 65%

● Not at all important   ● Top reason
● Important   ● Can't say

Figure 25: Lack of uniqueness of content

HOW PERSONAL DISCONNECT ACTS AS A DETERRENT

- 10%
- 33%
- 33%
- 24%

● Not at all important   ● Top reason
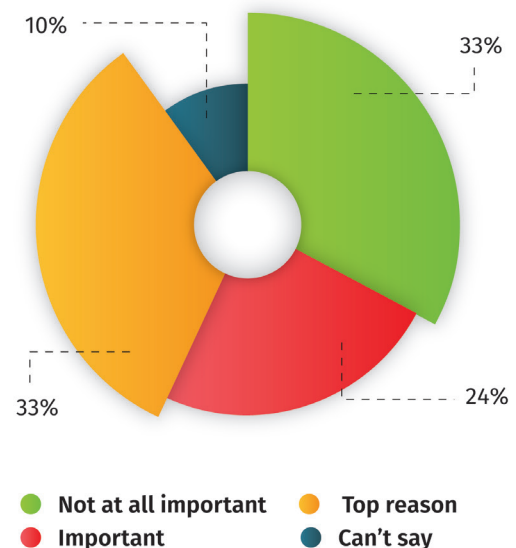● Important   ● Can't say

Figure 26: Personal disconnect

Ideal duration of an L&D programme

The most popular verdict is 1 week to 1 month. The shorter the duration higher the popularity of the programme. As the length of programme increases the popularity keeps decreasing.

Around 76 per cent of respondents voted for 1 month and less as an ideal duration of the training programme.

Around 16 per cent of respondents suggested 1-3 months as ideal duration while the 4 per cent each voted for 3-6 months and 6 months plus.

Among respondents from manufacturing sector, 45 per cent voted for 1 week, while 22 per cent chose 2 weeks-1 month as ideal duration. Another 16 per cent were in favour of 1-3 months.

A sizeable number of IT professionals (30 per cent), though, were in favour of 2weeks -1 month as an ideal duration. H

IDEAL DURATION OF LEARNING PROGRAMME

- 🟢 1 month or less
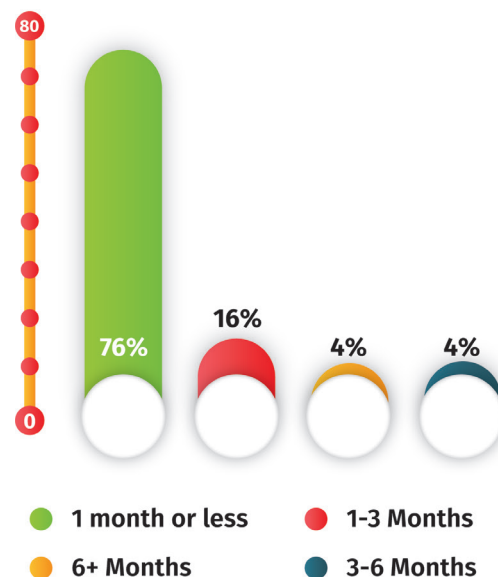- 🔴 1-3 Months
- 🟠 6+ Months
- 🔵 3-6 Months

Figure 27: Ideal duration of an L&D programme

Toplines

77 per cent say 'upskilling for business growth' is a top priority for any L&D programme, while 18 per cent say it is important.

People are divided on leadership development as an outcome of L&D programmes with 45 per cent saying it is top priority and 50 per cent calling it important.

General business agenda scores over individual learning when it comes to designing learning programmes — The ratio is 69:31.

55 per cent respondents feel human resources also need learning attention – that it is important if not a top priority.

Training for the HR function is a top priority for over 40 per cent respondents from the manufacturing and IT & ITES sectors.

58 per cent of respondents also feel it was important that the marketing function also needed maximum learning attention even if it wasn't a top priority.

Both CXOs and senior management professionals, 76% and 80%, respectively, unanimously agree that comprehensiveness of the course was the most important factor while selecting a learning partner.

78 per cent of mid-management professionals were in favour of certification offered by the learning partner, while 23 per cent said it was a top priority

71 per cent of respondents were of the opinion that entry-level professionals are very keen on learning.

61 per cent respondents feel mid-senior level employees needed to be pushed for learning and another 3 per cent thought them to be disinterested.

92 per cent CXOs believe that learning should be a top priority or very important for the senior managers.

83 per cent of senior management professionals feel learning programmes should be a top priority or matter of importance for the CXO community.

More respondents from BFSI and retail than manufacturing and IT say their CEOs are very encouraging and generous while allocating budget for learning programmes.

42 per cent respondents co-create programmes with their learning partners almost every time, which shows a higher involvement.

Artificial intelligence and data science are top of the agenda for training programmes – 74 per cent respondents name them as a top priority.

For soft skills training, communication and interpersonal skills are top on the priority list for 87 per cent and 82 per cent respondents, respectively.

65 per cent of respondents say, 'lack of uniqueness of content' is the number one deterrent for attending a learning programme.

About us

Hero Vired is a premium learning experience offering industry-relevant programmes and world class partnerships, to create the change makers of tomorrow. Hero Vired, as a company, believes everyone is made of big things. With the experience, knowledge and expertise of the Hero Group, Hero Vired is on a mission to change the way we learn. Hero Vired aims to give learners the knowledge, skills and expertise through deeply engaged and holistic experiences, closely mapped with industry to empower them to transform their aspirations into reality.

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